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TOPIC AND FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN SPOKEN KOREAN

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TOPIC AND FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN SPOKEN KOREAN

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Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2007

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank my committee members, Knud Lambrecht, Lisa Green, Steve Wechsler, Tony Woodbury, and Cinzia Russi, for their valuable advice and encouragement toward the completion of this dissertation. My special thanks go to my advisor, Dr. Lambrecht, for accepting me as his student, introducing the world of Information Structure to me, providing invaluable and insightful comments, and always showing consideration and kindness to me. I wish to also express my thanks to my friends in the department of linguistics, Elaine Chun, Dong-Rhin Shin, Q-Wan Kim, Sang-Hoon Park, So-Hee Kim, Seung-Eun Chang, Hyun-Jong Hahm, Jinung Kim, Jihwan Kim, Mi Jang, and Heeyoung Lyu, for so many joyful times that I shared with them in Austin. My deepest gratitude goes to my wife, Tae-Sook Park, who has heartily supported me with love, encouragement, and patience, and my son, Hyun-Min, who has given me endless joy and strength even in the most difficult times. Finally, I would like to thank God, who has helped me throughout this dissertation and guided me throughout my life.

TOPIC AND FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS IN SPOKEN KOREAN

Publication No. _____

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2007

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This study discusses topic and focus constructions in spoken Korean within the framework of information structure. Information structure is a part of grammar that deals with the relation between linguistic forms and the mental states of speakers and hearers. Since the different formal realizations of topic and focus constructions in Korean are due to differences in speakers' assumptions about the mental states of hearers, research on Korean topic and focus constructions falls under the proper domain of information structure.

Five different topic constructions in Korean are reviewed and their discourse contexts are analyzed; zero pronouns, bare NPs, and right-dislocated NPs are generally used for discourse-active topic referents, and the *maliya*-construction and *nun*-marked NPs are generally used for topic referents that are not discourse-active. Sometimes, active topic referents are also marked with *-nun* when the topic referents have more salient topics already established in the discourse or speakers are considering potential alternatives to the active topic referents. Topics are divided into ratified and unratified

topics according to whether their status as topics is assumed to be taken for granted by hearers. Among the five topic constructions in Korean, zero pronouns, bare NPs and right-dislocated NPs express ratified topics, while the *maliya*-construction and *nun*-marked topics express unrated topics.

The marker *-ka*, which has been long regarded as a subject indicator, is reanalyzed, and it is suggested that *-ka* marks not only the subject but also argument focus and sentence focus. Accessible or active referents can sometimes be marked with *-ka*, constituting sentence-focus constructions. In those constructions, the propositional content of the sentences expresses some unexpected or surprising event. Also, frequent occurrences of the marker *-ka* in presupposed subordinate clauses are examined, and it is suggested that *-ka* can be used as a mere subject indicator, losing its function of indicating focus in presupposed clauses with topic-comment constructions, in which there is no actual focus.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 OVERVIEW AND DATA

In Korean, subjects can be expressed with four different forms: zero pronouns, bare NPs,¹ *nun/un*²-marked NPs, and *i/ka*³-marked NPs. The following four sentences, thus, may express the same proposition “a person named John is studying at UT,” though their subjects have different forms:

- (1) a. John UT-eyse kongpwuhayyo.
 UT-at study
 ‘John is studying at UT.’
 b. John-i UT-eyse kongpwuhayyo.
 c. John-un UT-eyse kongpwuhayyo.
 d. Ø UT-eyse kongpwuhayyo.

The fact that one and the same proposition can be expressed by sentences with different forms of subjects has generated much interest among researchers in Korean linguistics, and it has been a source of much controversy and debate (e.g. see Choi (1984)). This dissertation investigates various issues related to differently marked Korean subject NPs within the framework of “information structure” (Lambrecht 1994), focusing primarily on their communicative functions. Drawing on Lambrecht’s (1994) framework, which

¹ Bare NPs in this dissertation are defined as NPs to which no marker (*-nun/-un*, *-i/-ka*) is attached. So in subject position, they are realized as NPs with neither *-nun/-un* nor *-i/-ka*. However, they can have determiners, possessive markers or other modifiers.

² *-nun/-un* are allomorphs of one morpheme; if the preceding noun ends in a consonant, *-un* is attached, otherwise *-nun* is attached.

³ *-i/-ka* are allomorphs of one morpheme; if the preceding noun ends in a consonant, *-i* is attached, otherwise *-ka* is attached.

assumes three types of focus structure (predicate-focus, argument-focus, and sentence-focus structures), I will show that the four different formal markings of Korean subjects constitute different topic and focus constructions in Korean: zero pronouns, bare NPs, and *nun/un*-marked NPs constitute topic constructions, and *i/ka*-marked NPs constitute focus constructions. This dissertation also examines other topic constructions (i.e. the *maliya*-construction and right-dislocation) and identifies their discourse contexts.

It has been widely accepted that *-nun/-un* (henceforth *-nun*) is a topic marker in Korean, marking either contrastive or non-contrastive topics. In other words, the basic assumption has been that NPs marked by *-nun* can be divided into two distinct categories based on the function of this marker. In this dissertation, however, I will compare various topic constructions in Korean and claim that both functions of *-nun* should be unified under the notion of “unratified topics.” Also, it will be shown that the contrastiveness related to the Korean topic marker *-nun* is a gradient notion: referents marked by *-nun* can have various degrees of contrastiveness depending on the discourse context. The comparison of topic constructions will further reveal that there is a formal difference between “ratified topics” and “unratified topics” in Korean as in French and English (Lambrecht 1994).

The *nun*-marked NPs and other topic NPs discussed in this dissertation are mainly in subject position. Unlike bare NPs in subject position, the use of which is generally determined pragmatically (i.e. determined by pragmatic functions and communicative needs), it has been pointed out by Lee & Thompson (1989) that the use of bare NPs in object position is often affected by non-pragmatic factors such as incorporation and conventional uses; according to Lee & Thompson, bare NPs are often allowed in object position when they are closely linked with their predicates forming a single concept, and there are certain expressions in which the forms containing bare-NP objects and verbs are

fixed by convention. Thus, determining the exact communicative function of bare NPs in object position and comparing them with other topic expressions may be problematic. Though I will mainly discuss topics in subject position, it should be noted that *nun*-marked topics and other topic expressions are also available in object position.⁴

Korean *-i/-ka* (henceforth *-ka*), which has long been regarded as a subject indicator, will be reanalyzed in this dissertation. On the basis of spoken Korean data, it will be shown that *-ka* marks not only the subject function but also both argument and sentence focus in Korean. Though *-ka* is a focus marker in Korean, the data will also show that it is sometimes attached to accessible or active referents in sentence-focus structures, in which case the proposition of the sentence describes some unexpected or surprising event. Also, the frequent occurrences of the marker *-ka* in presupposed subordinate clauses will be reviewed, and it will be proposed that *-ka* can be used for non-focal subjects merely as a subject indicator in some presupposed clauses.

The spoken Korean data which I use in this dissertation are mainly collected from two Korean television dramas: *Kaultonghwa* ‘Autumn Story,’ which aired in 2000 and *Pwuhwal* ‘Rebirth,’ which aired in 2005. I choose these two dramas because they contain natural and acceptable spoken Korean, representing present-day Seoul dialect. I also supplement the data from these two shows with sentences I have created based on my native-speaker intuition, which sometimes show some pragmatically odd discourse situations. I review six episodes, or about five and a half hours of *Kaultonghwa*, and five episodes, or about five hours of *Pwuhwal*. All of the data from the two dramas are either transcribed by me or taken from the transcription provided by the broadcasting company (KBS)⁵ that aired both of the dramas.

⁴ Lee (1999) shows that objects and other grammatical functions can also be marked with *-nun* in Korean.

⁵ I took the data from the website of KBS (www.kbs.co.kr).

1.2 ORGANIZATION

This dissertation is organized as follows:

In chapter 2, I will outline the basic theoretical background of this dissertation, namely Lambrecht's (1994) theory of "information structure." In addition to introducing key concepts, such as "information" and "focus," among others, I will clarify the difference between the notions "presupposition" and "assertion." The three different focus structures (i.e. predicate-focus, argument-focus, and sentence-focus structures) of English and French will be introduced, and it will be shown that English and French exploit different formal markings to express their focus structures. I will also provide a definition of "topic," based on the "aboutness" relation, and I will discuss different statuses of discourse referents in the minds of speech participants (e.g. identifiable/unidentifiable, active/inactive, and accessible).

Chapter 3 examines previous approaches to Korean *-nun* and *-ka*. First, it will be noted that there has been little work in the Korean literature that compares various topic constructions in Korean, as I do in chapter 4. Then, I will introduce five major previous approaches, which I have entitled "the division of *nun*-marked topics into contrastive and non-contrastive topics," "*-nun* as a discourse-topic-establishing marker," "focus-neutral *-ka*," "*-ka* as a continuing-topic marker," and "scrambling as an indicator of argument focus." After reviewing those five approaches, I will point out that each of them has its own problems.

In chapter 4, I will describe the various topic constructions in Korean (zero pronouns, bare NPs, *nun*-marked NPs, the *maliya*-construction and right-dislocation), and I will reveal in what discourse contexts each of the Korean topic constructions is used. By comparing those topic constructions, I will propose that zero pronouns, bare NPs, and right-dislocation constructions are used for different kinds of "ratified topics" and that

nun-marked NPs and the *maliya*-construction are used for different kinds of “unratified topics” in Korean.

In chapter 5, my investigation will show that *-ka* functions as a focus marker in Korean, indicating both argument-focus and sentence-focus structures.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Background: Lambrecht (1994)

2.1 INFORMATION STRUCTURE

My analyses of the four different subject NP forms and the related topic and focus constructions in Korean is largely based on the theory of information structure presented in Lambrecht (1994). According to Lambrecht, the theory of information structure pursues the relation between linguistic forms and the mental states of speakers and hearers. More specifically, it deals with how the speaker's assumptions about the mental states of the hearer affect the linguistic forms that the speaker actually produces. A speaker uses different sentence forms which have the same propositional content, depending on his assumptions about a hearer's mental states. The grammatical means which are used for this purpose are prosody, grammatical markers, ordering of constituents, complex grammatical constructions, etc.

Let us look at the definition of information structure proposed by Lambrecht:

That component of sentence grammar in which propositions as conceptual representations of states of affairs are paired with lexicogrammatical structures in accordance with the mental states of interlocutors who use and interpret these structures as units of information in given discourse contexts. (1994: 5)

One important proviso in the above definition is that even though information structure is concerned with assumptions about the mental states of the interlocutors, the assumptions are relevant only if they have some grammatical correlates in sentence structure. So, the speakers' assumptions which are not reflected in "lexicogrammatical structure" are not considered to be in the proper domain of information structure.

According to Lambrecht (1994:6), the most important notions of information structures are i) presupposition and assertion, “which have to do with the structuring of propositions into portions which a speaker assumes an addressee already knows or does not know,” ii) identifiability and activation, “which have to do with a speaker’s assumption about the statuses of the mental representations of discourse referents in the addressee’s mind at the time of an utterance,” and iii) topic and focus, “which have to do with a speaker’s assessment of the relative predictability vs. unpredictability of the relations between propositions and their elements in given discourse situations.” All of the notions mentioned above are related to a speaker’s assumptions about a hearer’s mental states with respect to propositions or discourse referents which are conveyed by the speaker’s utterance, and they are formally reflected in sentences. I will discuss those notions in later sections, and show how they have formal reflections in English, French and Korean.

As we shall see later, a speaker’s choice of the four different subject forms, which are actually realizations of different topic and focus constructions in Korean, is also affected by his assumptions about a hearer’s mental states. So, we may say that the four different forms are in the proper domain of information structure and that they are the phenomena which cannot be fully understood and explained without the theory of information structure.

2.2 ASSERTION AND PRESUPPOSITION

According to Lambrecht (1994:52), when a speaker utters a sentence, it usually contains two types of information: presupposition and assertion. Presupposition is a type of information that is already shared by a speaker and a hearer at the time of utterance

(old information), and assertion is information that is added to the hearer's mental world as a result of the utterance (new information). The following definitions of presupposition and assertion by Lambrecht will give us a clear picture of them:

PRAGMATIC PRESUPPOSITION: The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows or is ready to take for granted at the time the sentence is uttered

PRAGMATIC ASSERTION: The proposition expressed by a sentence which the hearer is expected to know or take for granted as a result of hearing the sentence uttered. (1994: 52)

In the above definitions, we have to note some important points that should be made clear. First, both presupposition and assertion are propositions. Following Dahl (1976), Lambrecht argues that what is stored in or conveyed to a hearer's mental world as objects of his knowledge or belief is propositional information. In other words, when a speaker says something to change the hearer's mental picture, what he tries to convey as new information is a proposition.

Second, we need to pay attention to the word "pragmatic." Lambrecht emphasizes the difference between pragmatic presupposition and logical or semantic presupposition; the former has to do with the speaker's assumption about the information status of propositions in utterance contexts, and the latter has to do with the logical or semantic relations between sentences. Thus the pragmatic presupposition is a relation between a person and a proposition, while the semantic presupposition is a relation between propositions (Stalnaker 1973). Lambrecht also emphasizes that it is the pragmatic notion of presupposition that is relevant for information-structure analysis.

Third, presuppositions are lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence. Unlike the notion of presupposition found in many discussions on pragmatics (e.g. Kempson 1975)

not every proposition shared between the speaker and the hearer counts as presupposition; only those shared propositions that have a lexicogrammatical manifestation in the sentence count as pragmatic presupposition in the theory of information structure.

2.2.1 Pragmatic Accommodation of Presuppositional Structure

As described above, pragmatic presupposition is a proposition which is lexicogrammatically evoked, and this entails that presupposition is not only a matter of the mental states of speakers and hearers but also a matter of grammar and lexicon. In other words, certain grammatical constructions are appropriately used only in certain presuppositional situations. According to Lambrecht, those constructions have presuppositional structures, which are inherent properties of linguistic expressions. In a normal conversation, if a speaker utters a linguistic expression which has a certain presuppositional structure, it is usually assumed that the discourse situation associated with the presuppositional structure is shared by the speaker and the addressee. For example, many sentence-initial English time adverbial clauses (e.g. those starting with *when*, *after*, *before* etc.) have presuppositional structures that tell us that the propositional content of the subordinate clauses is pragmatically presupposed. So, a time adverbial clause is used usually when the propositional content of the subordinate clause is presupposed in the discourse situation.

However, since the presuppositional structure is an inherent property of a linguistic expression, a speaker can use a presuppositional structure to create a presupposition, even though the speaker does not assume the presupposition to be known to the addressee. By using a presuppositional structure, the speaker acts as if he assumes that the addressee knows the presupposition, and the addressee responds to this by

supplying the required presupposition and by acting as if he indeed knew it. Finally, this newly created presupposition becomes a part of the pragmatic presuppositions shared by the speaker and the addressee in the conversation. The whole process of the pragmatic accommodation of presuppositional structure stated above is well formulated in the following “rule of accommodation for presupposition” by Lewis (1979):

If at time *t* something is said that requires presupposition *P* to be acceptable, and if *P* is not presupposed just before *t*, then – *ceteris paribus* and within certain limits – presupposition *P* comes into existence at *t*. (1979:172)

Let us take one example from Lambrecht (1994) to show how the accommodation happens. Suppose a story writer begins his story with the following sentence:

(2) Before I moved to Switzerland I had never seen a Rolls Royce. (1994:68)

Since the sentence in (2) contains the adverbial *before*-clause, it is usually assumed that the proposition of the subordinate clause is known to the addressee. However, since (2) is the first sentence of the story, it cannot be expected for the addressee to know the proposition. Nevertheless, the sentence is acceptable and there is no difficulty for the addressee to understand it. The rule of accommodation for presupposition proposed by Lewis explains the naturalness of the sentence: the speaker creates a presupposition with the *before*-clause and a cooperative addressee will act as if the proposition is already part of his knowledge.

2.3 THREE TYPES OF FOCUS STRUCTURE

In order to fully understand in what discourse contexts different topic and focus constructions in Korean (including the four differently marked subject NPs) occur, we should first distinguish three different focus structure types (Lambrecht 1994:221-238): predicate-focus, argument-focus, and sentence-focus structure. These different focus structure types, as their names indicate, are determined by which part of the proposition of an uttered sentence is focal. Since the focus structure types crucially involve the notion of “focus,” let us give the definition of focus first. The following is the definition of focus given by Lambrecht, which is adopted in this dissertation:

The semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition. (1994:213)

It should be noted that the above definition defines the nature of focus as “relational.” That is, whether or not a denotatum is focal is determined relative to the proposition of an uttered sentence but not by its own pragmatic properties. Also, according to the definition, focus is a semantico-pragmatic notion rather than a syntactic one; the notion is defined on the pragmatically structured proposition but not on a syntactic domain, and since the focus is a portion of a proposition, it cannot be a syntactic constituent. This definition of focus, thus, distinguishes itself from the “segmentation” view⁶ of information (Jackendoff 1972; Selkirk 1984), in which the information conveyed by a sentence is viewed as segmented into old and new information (new information corresponds to focus in this view), which are identified with syntactic constituents.

⁶ See Lambrecht (1994: 208-212), for more discussion and his criticism of the segmentation view.

Lambrecht calls the syntactic realization of a focus “focus domain,” emphasizing that “the pragmatic category must be sharply distinguished from its grammatical realization in the sentence.” To understand his definition completely, we have to clarify the distinction between assertion and presupposition. As mentioned in the previous section, an assertion is a proposition expected to be known or taken for granted by a hearer as a result of hearing a sentence uttered, while the presupposition is the set of propositions a speaker assumes to be known or taken for granted by the hearer at the time the sentence is uttered. So, we can divide the pragmatically structured proposition of an uttered sentence into two portions: one which is already part of the presupposition and the other which does not belong to the presupposition. This latter portion of the proposition, which makes the assertion different from the presupposition, is the focus. In the predicate-focus structure, which is also called topic-comment structure, the predicate is the focus and the subject is in the presupposition. In the argument-focus structure, an open proposition is presupposed and the missing argument for the open proposition is the focus, and in the sentence-focus structure, the focus covers the entire proposition: both the subject and the predicate.

These three different focus structures have different formal realizations in English and French as illustrated in the following examples from Lambrecht (1994:223):

(3) PREDICATE-FOCUS STRUCTURE

A: What happened to your car?

B: a. My car/It broke DOWN.⁷

b. (Ma voiture) elle est en PANNE.

⁷ Small capitals indicate the locus of the sentence accent.

(4) ARGUMENT-FOCUS STRUCTURE

A: I heard your motorcycle broke down?

B: a. My CAR broke down.

b. C'est ma VOITURE qui est en panne.

(5) SENTENCE-FOCUS STRUCTURE

A: What happened?

B: a. My CAR broke down.

b. J'ai ma VOITURE qui est en PANNE.

In the predicate-focus structure in (3B), it is clear that the subject in B's answer is in the domain of the presupposition, since A has already asked some information about B's car in his question. Thus, the presupposition in B's answer is that A wants to have some comment about B's car, i.e. B's car is the topic⁸ of the sentence, and the assertion is that the predicate "broke down" is the comment for B's car. So, the focus whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition is the predicate "broke down," and the focus domain is the VP. The information structure of the sentence is represented in (6)

(6) Sentence:	My car broke DOWN.	
Presupposition:	"Speaker's car is a topic for comment x"	
Assertion:	"x = broke down"	
Focus:	"broke down"	
Focus domain:	VP	(Lambrecht 1994: 226)

⁸ The definition of topic will be given in detail in section 2.4 below.

If we look at how the predicate-focus structure is formally realized, we notice that in both English (3Ba) and French (3Bb), the topical subject, which is in the presupposition, is expressed as an unaccented pronominal or a lexical NP and that the predicate carries the sentence accent. (Though it is clear that the sentences with pronominal subjects are preferred in the above context, the versions with lexical NPs are also presented as possible alternatives.)

As discussed earlier, the presupposition in the argument focus is an open proposition. The open proposition that is presupposed in (4B) is “speaker’s x broke down,” and the assertion is that the missing element in the open proposition is “car.” So the focus which makes the assertion available is “car,” and the focus domain is the NP “my car.” The information structure of the sentences in (4B) is represented as follows:

(7) Sentence:	My CAR broke down.	
Presupposition:	“speaker’s x broke down”	
Assertion:	“x = car”	
Focus:	“car”	
Focus domain:	NP	(Lambrecht 1994: 228)

The reason that the possessive determiner “my” is not included in the focus, even though it is part of the focus domain is that it is actually in the presupposition, as shown in the above information-structure representation. As we shall see later, the referents of unaccented pronominals in English are necessarily in the presupposition (i.e. topics), and they cannot be in focus.

Now, let us see how the argument-focus structure is formally expressed in English and French. First of all, the comparison of English and French argument-focus structures

tells us that they can mark the argument-focus structure in different ways. In English, we find an accent on the subject NP, and the rest of the sentence remains unaccented. In French, on the other hand, a cleft construction (the *c'est*-cleft construction) is used; one proposition is expressed by two clauses. It is noted that, in French, argument focus structure is expressed by the cleft construction as a whole, i.e. by a sequence of two clauses. The only common feature shared by English and French is the main sentence accent on the NP, which is the focus domain of the sentence.

In the sentence-focus structure in (5B), the proposition expressed by the sentence is not presupposed, which means that the focus covers the entire proposition. So, the focus domain of the sentence is the sentence itself, and the assertion is the proposition expressed by the sentence. The following is the information structure of the sentences in (5B):

(8) Sentence:	My CAR broke down.	
Presupposition:		
Assertion:	“speaker’s car broke down”	
Focus:	“speaker’s car broke down”	
Focus domain:	S	(Lambrecht 1994: 233)

Formally, the English and the French sentences are expressed in different ways again as in the argument-focus structure. We see that the sentence-focus sentence in English is identical, both prosodically and syntactically, to the argument-focus sentence; the accent is placed on the subject NP and all the other constituents remain unaccented. In French, the sentence-focus structure uses the *avoir*-cleft (*ya*-cleft) construction in which one simple proposition is expressed by two clauses, both of which have predicate-focus

structure. Thus, the French examples in (4B) and (5B) shows that both argument-focus and sentence-focus structures are expressed by cleft-constructions in French.

The above examples have shown that the devices employed to code focus structures in English are the sentence accents, while those in French are pragmatically specialized grammatical constructions (i.e. cleft constructions). Let us now ask how the three focus structures are grammatically expressed in Korean. The answers in Korean to the three questions, which require the three focus structures respectively, are provided below:

(9) A: What happened to your car?

B: Nay cha/ Ø KOCANGNASSE.

my car broke.down

‘My car/it broke DOWN.’

(10) A: I heard your motor cycle broke down?

B: Nay CHA-ka kocangnasse.

my car-NOM broke.down

‘My CAR broke down.’

(11) A: What happened?

B: Nay CHA-ka kocangnasse.

my car-NOM broke.down

‘My CAR broke down.’

In the predicate-focus structure in (9B), the topical subject can be expressed as either a bare NP or a zero pronoun. So compared to the English and French examples, the Korean example shows a difference; Korean uses a zero pronoun for a topic referent which would usually be expressed as an unaccented pronoun of a non-zero form in English and French. However, it will be shown later that unaccented pronouns in English and zero pronouns in Korean appear in almost the same discourse situations. Also, notice that the predicate constituent is accented in (9B) as in the predicate-focus structure of English and French.

Now, let us look at the argument-focus and sentence focus structures. Both in argument-focus (10B) and sentence-focus structures (11B), the subject is marked with the morphological marker *-ka*. The marker *-ka*, which generally marks the subject grammatical function in Korean, indicates in both sentences that the referent of the subject is focus. The fact that the marker *-ka* appears in both argument-focus and sentence-focus sentences tells us that it can serve as a focus marker in Korean. The data I will present in chapter 5 will show that the marker *-ka* functions not only as a subject marker but also as a focus marker in Korean.

The data presented above have provided some examples and relevant discourse contexts for three subject NP types (i.e. zero pronouns, bare NPs, and NPs with *-ka*) among the four that were introduced at the beginning of chapter 1. These data give us a glimpse that zero pronouns and bare NPs are used in topic constructions (i.e. predicate-focus constructions) and that *ka*-marked NPs are used in argument-focus and sentence-focus constructions in Korean. As pointed out earlier, however, Korean has more topic constructions (zero pronouns, bare NPs, topics marked with *-nun*, the *maliya*-construction, and right-dislocations), and we need to have more explicit and detailed explanations of their discourse contexts.

2.4 DEFINITION OF TOPIC

Before discussing the various topic constructions in Korean, let us give the definition of topic first. In this dissertation, following Lambrecht (1994), I have adopted the definition of topic based on the notion of “aboutness.” The notion of “aboutness” applied in the definition of topic defines topic as the thing which the proposition expressed by a sentence is about. The definition of topic based on the relation of “aboutness” between an entity and a proposition is also adopted by many linguists, including Kuno (1972), Gundel (1974, 1985, 1988), Dik (1978) and Reinhart (1982).

What does it mean for a proposition to be about an entity? Let us first look at the definition of topic proposed by Gundel⁹ (1988), who defines topic in terms of “pragmatic relations that hold relative to a discourse” (p. 210). The following definition of topic, as she suggests, helps us to capture the intuitive characterization of topic as what a proposition is about:

(12) DEFINITION OF TOPIC (Gundel 1988):

An entity, E, is the topic of a sentence, S, iff in using S the speaker intends to increase the addressee’s knowledge about, request information about, or otherwise get the addressee to act with respect to E.

Her definition of topic thus involves a relation of “aboutness” between an entity and a predication in a given discourse situation. A similar account of the notion of “aboutness”

⁹ Gundel (1985, 1988) makes a distinction between “pragmatic topic,” which is a relation that holds between a speaker and a sentence relative to a context and “syntactic topic,” which holds between a constituent and a sentence which contains that constituent, and which is defined directly on syntactic structure. The definition of topic in (12) based on the relation of “aboutness,” which is adopted in this dissertation, refers to pragmatic topic.

is found in Lambrecht (1994:119). According to him, a proposition is about a topic only when the sentence conveys relevant information about the topic, and consequently, increases the hearer's knowledge about it. He quotes the following from Strawson (1964), which gives a helpful characterization of the notion of "aboutness":

Statements, or the pieces of discourse to which they belong, have subjects not only in the relatively precise sense of logic and grammar, but in a vague sense with which I shall associate the words "topic" and "about"...Stating is not a gratuitous or random human activity. We do not, except in social desperation, direct isolated unconnected pieces of information at each other, but on the contrary intend in general to give or add information about what is a matter of standing current interest or concern. There is great variety of possible types of answer to the question what the topic of a statement is, what a statement is "about" ... and not every such answer excludes every other in a given case. (1964: 97)

"A matter of standing current interest or concern" is what Strawson takes to be a topic. The principle expressed in the above quote (statements are about "what is a matter of standing current interest and concern") is called the "Principle of Relevance" by Strawson, and as Lambrecht points out, this principle tells us that "a statement about a topic counts as informative only if it conveys information which is relevant with respect to this topic" (1994:119). Another important point we can notice in the quote is that the last lines, "There is great variety of possible types of answer to the question what the topic of a statement is..." show that the notions of relevance and aboutness (i.e. the notion of topic) are inherently vague. According to Lambrecht, it may be due to the vagueness related to the notion of topic that there are no unambiguous formal markings of the topic relation in many languages and that if a language has a formal topic marking, it marks only "imperfectly the relative degree of topicality of given referents."

Along with the definition of topic, we also have to distinguish between topics and topic expressions. As mentioned above, the topic relation is defined on the level of the proposition, and a topic is a referent in a proposition which the proposition is about. A topic expression, on the other hand, is defined on the syntactic level; a topic expression is a constituent in a sentence which designates a topic referent. To clarify the distinction between topic and topic expression, let us consider the following examples from Lambrecht (1994), which are originally taken from Reinhart (1982):

(13) a. A: Who did Felix praise?

B: Felix praised MAX.

b. A: Who did Felix praise?

B: He praised HIMSELF.

In B's answer in (13a), the subject constituent *Felix* is a topic expression, since the proposition expressed by the sentence is about the previously mentioned referent "Felix." In B's answer in (13b), the pronoun *he* is also a topic expression, while the reflexive pronoun *himself* is not a topic expression but a focus expression, whose referent, as an argument focus, fills the gap in the presupposed open proposition "Felix praised X." Both the anaphoric and the reflexive pronouns, however, happen to denote the same referent, which is the topic of the proposition. That is, the reflexive pronoun *himself* happens to have the topic of the proposition as its referent, though it is a focus expression in the sentence. The sentences in (13), thus, show that the same referent can appear as both a focus expression and a topic expression in the same sentence, which explains why it is necessary to distinguish topics and topic expressions. Let me close this section with the definitions of "topic" and "topic expression" proposed by Lambrecht (1994:131):

(14) TOPIC: A referent is interpreted as the topic of a proposition if in a given situation the proposition is construed as being about this referent, i.e. as expressing information which is relevant to and which increases the addressee's knowledge of this referent.

TOPIC EXPRESSION: A constituent is a topic expression if the proposition expressed by the clause with which it is associated is pragmatically construed as being about the referent of this constituent.

2.5 THE MENTAL REPRESENTATIONS OF DISCOURSE REFERENTS AND THE TOPIC ACCEPTABILITY SCALE

As defined in the previous section, topics are discourse referents, but not every discourse referent can be a topic. To be a topic, a referent should have a certain degree of assumed accessibility to an addressee; the more accessibility a referent has, the more easily it is accepted as a topic. In section 2.5.1 and 2.5.2, I will be concerned with the issue of how discourse referents are assumed to be represented in the mind of the speech participants, and in section 2.5.3, their topic acceptability will be discussed. Following Lambrecht (1994:76), two information-structure categories, i.e. "identifiability" and "activation" will be introduced and used in this dissertation as major criteria to classify discourse referents.

2.5.1 Identifiability

First, discourse referents are divided into identifiable and unidentifiable referents according to whether or not referents are assumed to be represented in the addressee's mind at the time of utterance (Lambrecht 1994:77-92). An identifiable referent is the one

which a speaker assumes to be already represented in the addressee's mind and, as its name indicates, the speaker assumes that the addressee can "pick it out among all those which can be designated with a particular linguistic expression and identify it with the one which the speaker has in mind" (p.77). An unidentifiable referent, on the other hand, is the one which is not assumed to be thus represented in an addressee's mind. These two different categories of referents have different grammatical realizations in some languages. For example, in languages which have a contrast between definite and indefinite articles, the two different articles and other determiners regularly express the distinction of identifiable and unidentifiable referents. However, it should not be expected that there is exactly a one-to-one correlation between identifiable/unidentifiable referents and definite/indefinite articles. For example, a generic concept, which is usually assumed to be identifiable, can be expressed with an indefinite article in English. So as Lambrecht (1994) indicates, the correlation is "at best an imperfect one," which is also proven by the fact that the use of definite articles and indefinite articles are not the same across languages.

2.5.2 Activation

In the previous section, identifiable referents are defined as those which are assumed to be already represented in an addressee's mind at the time of utterance. But not every identifiable referent is represented in the same way in an addressee's mind. According to Chafe (1987), there are three different activation states for discourse referents. A referent can belong to one of the following activation states: inactive, semi-active (or accessible), and active. Some identifiable referents may be in the center of attention or in the consciousness of the addressee at the time of utterance, while others are just in his long-term memory. Active referents are those which are currently in the

consciousness of an addressee, and inactive referents are those which are in the addressee's long-term memory. Chafe defines the semi-active/accessible concept as one "that is in a person's peripheral consciousness." That is, a semi-active/accessible referent is not one which is directly in the center of attention or in the consciousness of an addressee, but "a concept of which a person has a background awareness." Chafe argues there are two kinds of accessible referents; a referent may be accessible "through deactivation from an earlier state, typically by having been active at an earlier point in the discourse," or it may be accessible if it "belongs to the set of expectations associated with a schema." The following is the definition of a schema by Chafe (also cf. the concept of "semantic frame" (Fillmore 1982), which is quite similar to that of schema):

A schema is usefully regarded as a cluster of interrelated expectations. When a schema has been evoked in a narrative, some if not all of the expectations of which it is constituted presumably enter the semi-active status. From that point on, they are more readily available to recall than they would have been as inactive concepts. (Chafe 1987: 29)

As an example of a schema, Chafe mentions the concepts related to an undergraduate class. Concepts such as "instructor," "student," and "classroom" are all included in the schema of the undergraduate class, and all enter accessible status if the schema is evoked by mentioning one of its component. Lambrecht (1994) calls the type of accessible referents whose accessible status is due to deactivation "textually accessible" and the type of accessible referents whose accessible status is due to a schema "inferentially accessible." And he adds a third type of accessible referent which he calls "situationally accessible." Situationally accessible referents are those whose accessible status is due to their presence in the text-external world. In other words, situationally

accessible referents have their accessible status by virtue of being present in a speech situation.

Active and inactive referents have grammatical correlates in languages. As discussed in Chafe (1987), active referents have grammatical correlates in morphology and prosody. Morphologically, active referents are usually coded as pronouns, inflectional or zero pronominals, while inactive referents are coded as lexical NPs, and prosodically, active referents are usually expressed as unaccented NPs, while inactive referents are expressed as accented NPs. For example, in English, active referents are usually manifested as unaccented pronouns, and inactive referents as accented lexical nouns.

To summarize, discourse referents are divided into identifiable and unidentifiable referents, depending on whether or not discourse referents are assumed to be represented in an addressee's mind. Once a referent is assumed to be identifiable, it is in one of the following three states: active, inactive, accessible. Finally, accessible referents are subdivided into textually accessible, inferentially accessible and situationally accessible referents.

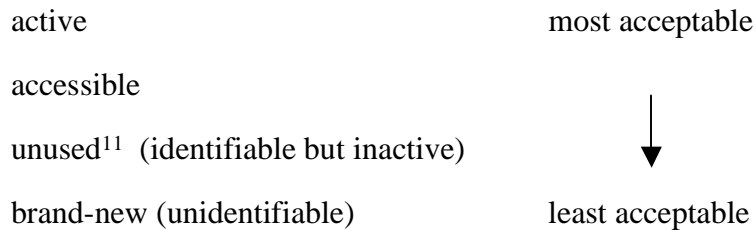
2.5.3 The Topic Acceptability Scale

The definition of topic presented in (14) indicates that a referent is the topic of a proposition if the proposition is about this referent. According to Lambrecht (1994:164), “for a statement to count as information about a certain topic, the speaker must assume that the hearer finds the statement relevant with respect to this topic in the context of the speech situation,” and “for a statement to be relevant with respect to a topic, this topic itself must be of current interest.” Without a topic having a certain degree of pragmatic accessibility to an addressee, it cannot be of current interest to an addressee; in other

words, if a referent is to be interpreted as a topic of a proposition, it should have a certain degree of pragmatic accessibility or salience¹⁰ in the discourse.

While a topic referent which has a low degree of accessibility could cause difficulty for an addressee to interpret the uttered sentence, a topic referent with a high degree of pragmatic accessibility would not cause such problems. Lambrecht (1994:165) points out that “such difficulties of interpretation can be accounted for by postulating a general correlation between the activation and identifiability states of topic referents and the pragmatic acceptability of sentences,” and suggests the following “topic acceptability scale”:

(15) THE TOPIC ACCEPTABILITY SCALE



According to the scale above, sentences containing active referents as their topics are most acceptable. This is because sentences with active topic referents, when they are interpreted by an addressee, do not require from the addressee the additional mental effort of assessing the topic referents; the addressee just needs to process the propositional

¹⁰ The notion of “salience” can be defined as pragmatic “accessibility” or “topic-expectedness” of a referent; a referent can be considered “salient,” if it is assumed to be easily accessible to the speech participants or if it is assumed to be easily expected as a topic. So a referent A is considered more salient than a referent B, if A is assumed to be more easily accessible or more easily expected as a topic. On the topic acceptability scale (p. 25), a referent on a higher level (e.g. active) is more salient than the one on a lower level (e.g. unused).

¹¹ The terms “unused” and “brand-new” are borrowed from Prince (1981a).

information about the topic which is already available in his consciousness. In chapter 4, we will see that active topics are often expressed as zero pronominals in Korean which requires the minimum amount of processing effort for an addressee. Accessible referents are less acceptable than active referents since they require, in addition to the task of interpreting the proposition which is about the topic referent, that a hearer should determine the referent of the topic expression by remembering, inferring, etc. But they are still acceptable and frequently occur as topic expressions. In Korean, accessible topics are generally expressed as NPs marked with *-nun* or they occur in the *maliya*-construction (see sections 4.3 and 4.4). Next, sentences with unused topics constitute a borderline case, and their acceptability varies widely depending on the language, the type of discourse, and the speech situation. The mental effort required to interpret sentences containing unused topic referents is relatively high since the hearer has to process the topic referent which is not available from the previous discourse. So, they are the least preferred as topic-containing sentences. Finally, the scale shows that sentences with unidentifiable topic referents are least acceptable. If a sentence has an unidentifiable referent as its topic, the hearer would be forced to interpret the proposition which is about something he cannot even identify, and this will lead to unacceptability of the sentence.

Chapter 3 Previous Approaches to *-nun* and *-ka*

The study on the markers *-ka* and *-nun* has been one of the most frequently researched areas in Korean linguistics (S. Choi 1984; Kim 1990; Jung 1990; I. Y. Lee 1996; C. Lee 1999, 2003; H. Choi 1996, 1998; Han 1998; Shimojo & Choi 2000; Choi & Shimojo 2001; Gil & Tsoulas 2004 among others). Most of the research on the Korean marker *-nun* agrees that it has the function of topic-marking. However, it should be emphasized that there have been few attempts to compare the various topic constructions in Korean (zero-pronouns, bare NPs, *nun*-marked NPs, the *maliya*-construction, and right-dislocation), which would show, for example, how topics marked by *-nun* are different from topics with other formal markings. Though it is generally accepted that the marker *-ka* indicates the grammatical function “subject” in Korean, researchers do not show an agreement with respect to its role in the discourse; some (e.g. Jung (1990)) argue that it is related to focus-marking, while others (e.g. Choi (1996) and Choi & Shimojo (2001)) regard it as focus-neutral. For example, Choi (1996) argues that a referent marked by *-ka* is not “informationally restricted,” i.e. the referent is not necessarily focal. Including Choi’s view on the Korean marker *-ka*, I will present major previous approaches to the markers *-ka* and *-nun* in this chapter; in section 3.1, two different types of approaches to *-nun* will be introduced, and in section 3.2, three different types of approaches to *-ka* will be introduced. Those types of approaches will be reviewed and examined below, and it will be shown that each of the approaches has its own problems.

3.1 PREVIOUS APPROACHES TO –*NUN*

3.1.1 The Division of *nun*-Marked Topics into Contrastive and Non-Contrastive Topics

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the marker –*nun* has been generally believed to be a topic marker in Korean, and it has also been widely accepted in the Korean literature (e.g. C. Lee 1999, 2003; Jung 1990; I. Y. Lee 1996) that –*nun* has two distinct functions, that of marking contrastive and non-contrastive topics. The basic argument of such an approach is that referents marked by –*nun* can be divided into two different categories according to whether or not a speaker is thinking about other alternatives when he makes a statement about a topic. The following data from C. Lee (1999) have some examples of contrastive and non-contrastive topics:

(16) a. A: What did Bill's sisters do?

B: **Ceyil elin tongsayng-un** Joe-hako kissuhaysse.

most young sister-TOP Joe-with kissed

‘**The youngest sister (nun)** kissed Joe.’

b. A: How did the quiz go?

B: **Lwummeyitu hanmyeng-un** hapkyekhaysseyo.

roommate one-TOP passed

‘**One of the roommates (nun)** passed.’

(17) a. **Mwul-un** thwumyenghata.

water-TOP be.transparent

‘**Water (nun)** is transparent.’

b. **Mayli-nun** yocum mwes ha-ni?

Mary-TOP these.days what do-Q

‘What does **Mary (nun)** do these days?’

In (16aA), A is asking a question about Bill’s sisters. However, B answers only about one of them (i.e. the youngest sister). So the speaker would have alternatives in (16aB): the speaker is thinking about the other potential topics when she makes the utterance, i.e. other sisters. Likewise in (16bB), where it is most likely to be assumed that both the speaker and the addressee know that B has roommates, when the speaker replies that one of his roommates passed the quiz, he would have alternatives in his mind, which include himself and the other roommates. Thus, the topics marked by *–nun* in (16aB) and (16bB) are interpreted as contrastive. The sentence in (17a), which Lee gives as an example of non-contrastive topics, is a generic statement. Though Lee does not specify any discourse context for the sentence in (17a), we may suppose the sentence is uttered in a situation where the speaker and the addressee are looking at water in a glass in a chemistry class. If the sentence is uttered in such a situation, the topic would be interpreted as non-contrastive according to Lee, since there are no clear alternatives in the context. However, it should be noted that, even in that situation, the possibility that the topic “water” is contrastive cannot be completely excluded. That is, the possibility that the speaker is thinking implicitly or explicitly about other non-transparent objects or that he may select especially “water” among other alternative objects cannot be excluded in the situation; the referent “water” may be interpreted as either contrastive or non-contrastive. Similarly in (17b), if we assume that the speaker accidentally meets Mary’s sister and that the sentence is uttered immediately after an exchange of greetings between them (Lee does not give a context for (17b) either), the speaker would not have any explicit

alternatives; the topic is interpreted as non-contrastive. As in (17a), however, it cannot be totally excluded that its topic is interpreted as contrastive; e.g. the speaker may be thinking of other family members of Mary when he utters the sentence. In fact, all we can say about the examples in (16) and (17) is that those in (16) are more contrastive than those in (17).

Contrary to Lee's argument, however, a wider range of spoken Korean data with *nun*-marked topics, which are provided below, will show that *nun*-marked topics, in fact, show various degrees of contrastiveness depending on the context. Thus, the division of contrastive and non-contrastive topics among *nun*-marked topics would not be as clear-cut as Lee argues. Let us look at some examples of *nun*-marked topics, and see if those topics can be divided into contrastive and non-contrastive topics (the examples of *nun*-marked topics in (18) – (20) will appear again in section 4.3):

- (18) (AS¹²) Context: B is A's secretary, and he came into A's office to get his signature. A knows B is in constant contact with A's big brother, so he is asking B how his brother is doing now.

A: 큰 형님은 잘 계신데요?

Kun **hyengnim-un** cal kyeysi-nteyyo?

big brother-TOP well get.along-Q

'Is **my big brother (nun)** doing well?'

¹² To mark the different sources, I use AS for the data from *Kaultonghwa* 'Autumn story,' RB for those from *Pwuhwal* 'Rebirth,' and CS for those I (Chisung Oh) make up; the abbreviations (AS or RB or CS) will appear at the beginning of each of the Korean data.

B: 아, 예. 다음 주에 본가 사모님 생신이십니다.

A, yey. Tauncwu-ey ponka samonim sangsin-isinita. Olagasi-lke-cyo?

ah yes next.week-in family madam birthday-be go-will-Q

‘Ah, yes. Your mother’s birthday is next week. Will you go?’

A: 제가 가면 기뻐해 주실래나? 주세요. 어디 싸인하면 되는거죠?

Ceyka ka-myen kippehaycwusi-lay-na? Cwu-seyo.

I-NOM go-if be.glad-would-Q give-please

Eti ssainha-myen toy-nunke-cyo?

where sign-if be.OK-Q

‘If I go, would she be happy? Please give it to me. Where should I sign?’

(19) (AS) Context: A and B are friends since they studied art together in America.

A visited a hotel where B is staying. The owner of the hotel is B’s father, who ordered B to stay at the hotel because he wanted his son to learn how to manage a hotel. A met B on a golf course which is near the hotel. They left the golf course and now they are eating dinner at a restaurant. A knows that B wants to leave the hotel.

A: 잘 버티고 있네?

Cal petigo issney?

well endure be

‘You are patient enough.’

B: 버텨야지. 아버진 나 좋아하잖아. 형들이 가끔 내려와서 괴롭히는 거
외엔 뭐. 어, 직원들은 아직 몰라. 오너 아들이 일 배우러 내려 왔다
그럼 복잡하니까.

Pethye-yaci. **Apeci-n** na coahacanha. Hyengtul-i kakkum
stand-should father-TOP me likes brothers-NOM sometimes

naylyewase koylophinunke oyeyn mwe. E, **cikwentul-un** molla.
come.down tease except O.K ah employees-TOP don't.know

One atuli ilpaywule naylye wassta kulem pokcaphanikka.
owner son job.learn down come if be.complicated

‘I have to be patient. **My father (nun)** likes me. It is OK to stay in this hotel
except that my brothers sometimes come over here and give me trouble. Ah, **the
employees (nun)** do not know I am a son of the owner. If they knew I came down
to learn my job, it would make it a little complicated.’

A: 일 배워? 골프만 친다며?

Il paywe? Kolpu-man chin-tamye?
job learn golf-only play-I.heard

‘Are you learning your job? I heard you are playing only golf?’

B: 직업이 골퍼데? 프로 자격증 보여줘?

Cikepi kolphe-nte? Phulo cakyekcung poye-cwe?
my.job golfer.be pro license show-Q

‘I am a professional golfer. Do you want to see my license?’

A: 미술은?

Miswul-un?

art-TOP

‘What about **art (nun)**?’

B: 미술만 안하면 다 된대잖아. 맛있네. 최씨 아줌마나 하나 시켜
내려 보내줄까?

Miswul-man anha-myen ta toy-ntaycanha. Massissne.
art-only not.do-if everything be.OK-I.heard be.delicious

Choy-ssiacwummana hana sikye naylye ponay-lkka?

Choi-Mrs. one order down give.send-shall

‘I was told (by my father) that everything is OK except art. It’s delicious. Shall I
order one and send it down to Mrs. Choi?’

(20) (AS) Context: A was working as a telephone operator in a hotel, and B is a
son of the owner of the hotel. B loves A romantically, but A is not interested
in B. Because B wanted to see A every day, B changed A’s position in the
hotel without listening to A’s opinion. Now B is complaining to A about this.
A is swimming in a pool and B is talking to A beside the pool watching A
swimming.

A: 개인 메이드라니. 대체 나한테 무슨 감정이예요? 안들리는 척 하지
말아요. 우리 수영장 물속으로 다 마이크 장치 돼있다구요. 나
교환원이지 호텔 정식 직원도 아니라고요. 사람들이 대체 뭐라구

생각하겠어요? 벌써 메이드실 실장님은 절 안 좋게 본다구요. 직원은 손님이란 소문나면 퇴사란 말이에요. 소문 나면 책임질 거예요?

Kayin meyidulani. Taycey na-hantey mwusun kamceng-i-eyyo?
personal room.service.person on.earth me-to what bad.feeling-be-Q

An tulinun cekhaci malayo. Wuli swuyengcang mwul sokulo ta maiku
not listen pretend don't our pool water inside all mike

cangchitway isstakwuyo. Na kyohoanwen-i-ci hothel cengsil
installed be I telephone.operator-be-but hotel official

cikwen-to anilakwuyo. Salatuli taycey mwelakwu saykakhakeyss-eyo?
employee-even not people on.earth how think-Q

Pelsse **meyidu** **silcangnim-un** nal an cohkey pontakwuyo.
already room.service.person chief-TOP me not good think

Cikwen-nun sonnim-ilang somwun-na-myen toysalanmaliyeyo.
employee-TOP customer-with rumor-happen-if be.fired

Somwun-na-myen chaykimcisil-ke-yeyo?
rumor-happen-if take.responsibility-will-Q

‘A personal room service person? What bad feelings on earth do you have toward me? Don’t pretend you can’t listen. We have mikes installed in our pool. I am a

telephone operator, and I am not even an official employee in this hotel. What on earth do people think? **The chief (nun)** of the room service department already does not think I am good. **Employees (nun)** are fired if it is rumored that they have a love affair with customers. If a rumor happens, will you take the responsibility?

B: 책임 어떻게 지면 되는데? 어떻게 지면 되는데?

Chaykim ettehkey cimyen toy-nunte? Ettehkey cimyen toy-nunte?

responsibility how take-if be.OK-Q how take-if be.OK-Q

‘How can I take the responsibility? How can I?’

In (18), (19) and (20), which are taken from the TV drama *Kaultonghwa* ‘Autumn Story,’ we have six examples of *nun*-marked NPs. If we look at the examples and their contexts one by one, we can see that all of them have different degrees of contrastiveness.

First, *miswulun* ‘painting’ in (19) would have the highest degree of contrastiveness because it is clearly contrasted to golf, which is the previous topic, and *apecin* ‘my father’ and *cikwentulun* ‘the employee’ in (19) also have relatively stronger contrastiveness because they may be contrasted with the brothers and the speaker himself, respectively. However, since the contrast is indirect in these cases, their degree of contrastiveness would be a little lower than that of *miswulun*. Next, *silcangnimun* ‘the chief’ and *cikwuenun* ‘employees’ in (20) would have a lesser degree of contrastiveness, because the alternatives for these topics are a little vague in the context (possibly other workers in the department for *silcangnimun* ‘the chief,’ and customers for *cikwuenun* ‘employee’). And finally, *kun hyengnimun* ‘my big brother’ in (18) would have the lowest degree of contrastiveness because it appears discourse-initially with no explicit alternatives. So the topic may be called non-contrastive, if the speaker really does not

think of any alternatives. However, even in this case the speaker may be implicitly thinking of some alternatives, so the possibility that the topic is not totally non-contrastive cannot be excluded. In either case, this final example has a lesser degree of contrastiveness than the other examples. Each of the six *nun*-marked topics, thus, shows different degrees of contrastiveness, and it seems almost impossible to divide this continuum into two parts and call one part contrastive and the other non-contrastive. Therefore, I argue that *nun*-marked topics in Korean cannot be divided into two distinct categories, i.e. contrastive and non-contrastive topics and that the contrastiveness related to the Korean topic marker *-nun* should be regarded as a gradient notion (cf. Lambrecht (1994) and Bolinger (1961)).

3.1.2 *-nun* as a Discourse-Topic-Establishing Marker

Based on the assumption that *nun*-marked topics are either contrastive or non-contrastive, Shimojo & Choi (2000) and Choi & Shimojo (2001) argue that *-nun* establishes discourse topics in Korean, if it does not mark contrastive topics: that is, if *-nun* marks non-contrastive topics, it functions as a discourse-topic marker at the same time, which “establishes a particular referent as the most prominent discourse figure.” According to them, this established referent remains as a discourse topic until the next prominent referent appears as a new discourse topic, and the new discourse topic emerges with *-nun* again, indicating the shift of the discourse topic.

Let us consider the following data¹³ of Choi & Shimojo (2001), in which three referents are *nun*-marked:

¹³ Choi & Shimojo (2001) translate the original Korean spoken data into English with the relevant *nun*-markings.

(21) A: ... **Yoon Sekhwa-nun** once sold her house, not a big one, and in addition, sold any sellable things she owned such as necklace, etc. and did a play. It was an incident that **common people-un** cannot easily think of. Why did you do that then?

B: When I came back to Korea in 1985, **all my family-nun** lived in the United States and their opposition (to my being an actress) was very strong. How I persuaded my mother. I said, ‘Our teacher will get me a place to live and there is nothing to worry about.’ and I came. But I have no place to stay so I crashed in one of my senior friends’ house. I stayed in my senior’s for a month ...

The data in (21) are taken from a TV talk show entitled “Power Interview,” in which a main host and 3-4 more people are talking with a guest. In (21), one of the hosts (A) is asking Yoon Sekhwa (B), a famous female actress in Korea, why she sold her house, and Yoon Sekhwa answers this question by starting to talk about how she lived as a poor actress in Korea a long time ago. Among the three *nun*-marked NPs in (21), Choi & Shimojo (2001) argue that only the first one is a discourse topic, while the other two are merely contrastive topics. In this way, they divide *nun*-marked topics into contrastive topics and discourse topics, though they do not give their own definitions of contrastive and non-contrastive topics. If we look at the data in (21) only, their argument might seem plausible, since the established discourse topic “Yoon Sekhwa” actually remains as such throughout the passage, and the other two topics seem more contrastive in the context.

However, as I mentioned, their argument is based on the assumption that *nun*-marked topics are divided into contrastive and non-contrastive topics, and thus we should note that their approach faces the same problem as the one introduced in section 3.1.1.

Also, a careful examination of the spoken data presented in section 3.1.1 will reveal that it cannot be claimed that non-contrastive *nun*-marked topics are discourse topics; a *nun*-marked topic can be either a discourse topic or merely a sentence topic depending on a speaker's intention (cf. section 4.4 below).

Among the data I presented in section 3.1.1, we can find some which show that relatively less contrastive topics are not intended (by the speaker) as “the most prominent figure” in a discourse (i.e. the discourse topic) and also some data which show that relatively more contrastive topics play the role of discourse topics. The data in (20) and (19) above have relevant examples. For example, as discussed in section 3.1.1, the two *nun*-marked topics *silcangnim-un* ‘the chief’ and *cikwuen-un* ‘employees’ in (20) are assumed to have a relatively lower degree of contrastiveness since the alternatives for these topics are a little vague in the context. However, it is clear that they are not discourse topics. On the other hand, the *nun*-marked topic *miswul-un* ‘art’ in (19) has a relatively higher degree of contrastiveness, but it is clear from the context that the speaker wants to talk about this topic in the continuing discourse (it should be also noted, however, that the addressee intentionally changes the topic to “food,” possibly because he does not want to talk about “art”).

To summarize, Choi and Shimojo's argument that a non-contrastive *nun*-marked topic carries the function of establishing a discourse topic cannot be accepted for the following reasons. First and most of all, as argued in 3.1.1, there is no clear division of contrastive and non-contrastive topics among *nun*-marked topic referents, and second, whether or not a topic is a discourse topic is irrelevant to its relative degree of contrastiveness in the context.

3.2 PREVIOUS APPROACHES TO *-ka*

3.2.1 Focus-Neutral *-ka*

Based on the fact that *ka*-marked NPs encode both discourse-old¹⁴ (active) and discourse-new (inactive) referents in Korean, Choi (1996) and Choi & Shimojo (2001) argue that the marker *-ka* in Korean is focus-neutral, i.e. *ka*-marked referents can be interpreted as either focus or non-focus depending on the context. As will be shown in the data in chapter 5, it is indeed true that in Korean both active and inactive referents can be *ka*-marked, and since Choi's (1996) definition of focus is based on whether a discourse element is "new" or "old," this definition can only predict that *-ka* marks both focus and non-focus in Korean. Choi's definition of focus follows what we have called "the segmentation view of information," and as mentioned in section 2.3, many approaches on focus in the literature (e.g. Selkirk 1984; Jackendoff 1972) adopt this definition. The main character of this segmentation view is that the information conveyed by a sentence can be partitioned into "old information (non-focus)" and "new information (focus)," and that the old and new information are identified with syntactic constituents in the sentence. However, as defined in chapter 2, old and new information are propositions, which cannot be conveyed merely by syntactic constituents; they are conveyed by establishing relations (i.e. topic and focus relations) in the pragmatically structured proposition of an uttered sentence. Focus is the portion in the pragmatically structured proposition which contributes to creating new information, and in this way, the focal status of a certain

¹⁴ Prince (1992) classifies discourse referents into discourse-old and discourse-new depending on whether or not they are already introduced in a discourse, and into hearer-old and hearer-new depending on whether or not they are assumed to be identifiable to a hearer. Thus, the distinction of discourse-old and discourse-new referents suggested by Prince is similar to that of active and inactive referents, and the distinction of hearer-old and hearer-new referents is similar to that of identifiable and unidentifiable referents in our classification.

element in the proposition is determined by its relation to the proposition. So the focus cannot be directly equated with discourse-new elements expressed in the sentence.

To support their claim that *ka*-marked referents can be interpreted as either focus or non-focus, Choi & Shimojo (2001) present the following data, in which some active referents are *ka*-marked:

- (22) ... It's a long story. Should I tell it? Well, there is a senior actress Kim Senglye and Senglye lent me 2 million won. With that 2 million won, **I-*ka*** finally got a 7.5 Pyeng monthly-paying apartment. I was living there and my mother, (I am her little girl, although she hated me for not staying in the States and starting being an actress,) missed and worried about her little girl. So, **my mother-*ka*** came to Korea. When she came and saw my apartment, she asked 'your theater got you this?' So, I said 'Mom, this is a good apartment. It is so good.' ... Then **my mother-*ka*** came to know the truth. She knew that the theater didn't get me that apartment and that it was only monthly ... **My mother-*ka*** collected her own money and called my brother and my sister in the States (to get more money). And **my mother-*ka*** bought me a 13-Pyeng whole-rent apartment when she left.

The passage in (22), which is taken from the same TV show as the data in (21), is spoken by Ywunsekhwa. In the passage, she is telling the host about the difficulties that she had when she came to Korea from America to be an actress. Choi & Shimojo find out 5 active referents which are *ka*-marked in the passage (the relevant NPs are all marked with *-ka* and highlighted in the passage).

As will be discussed more in detail in chapter 5, the two functions of sentence-focus structures in the discourse is reporting an event (event-reporting) and introducing a new referent into a discourse (presentational). When a speaker expresses an unexpected event by a proposition which involves an active/accessible subject referent in Korean (it will be shown in section 5.3 that an event-reporting sentence whose subject referent is active/accessible expresses an unexpected or surprising event), the active/accessible referent cannot be expressed as a topic NP; since the information the speaker wants to express is an event rather than a comment about a topic in this case, the sentence cannot have topic-comment structure. Rather, it should have sentence-focus structure as an event-reporting sentence, and consequently, the active subject referent is in focus and *ka*-marked. (Recall that my argument is that *-ka* is a focus marker in Korean.) Consider the following exchange between two friends, which contains an active referent marked with *-ka*:

(23) (CS: 5¹⁵) Context: A and B are close friends and attend the same school.

They know each other's family very well. They met at school after a long break and exchanged greetings.

A: 너희 어머니는 요즘 어떻게 지내셔?

Nehuy emeni-nun yocum ettehkey cinaysy-e?

Your mother-TOP these.days how get.along-Q

'How is your mother doing these days?'

¹⁵ For each of the data that I (Chisung Oh) make up or revise (cf. the revised versions of the original data in (34), (53), (54), and (55)), to confirm their assumed pragmatic acceptability or oddity in a given context, I ask five other Koreans. I mark each of them with the number of the agreeing subjects, i.e. for the data which are assumed to be pragmatically acceptable, I mark them with the number of the subjects who say "acceptable," and for the data which are assumed to be pragmatically odd, I marked them with the number of the subjects who say "odd."

B: 어머니가 어제 다치셨어.

Emeni-ka ecey tachisyesse.

Mother-NOM yesterday got.hurt

‘**My mother (ka)** got hurt yesterday.’

In (23A), A is asking about B’s mother, and B is replying with the news that his mother got hurt yesterday, which would be rather surprising to A. What the speaker aims to express in (23B) is the surprising event of his mother getting hurt rather than adding some comment about his mother. Thus the sentence in (23B) is not interpreted as a comment about a topic. Instead, it functions as an event-reporting sentence which should have sentence-focus structure. Though the *ka*-marked referent in (23B) is active, it is still interpreted as focal and for this reason it is *ka*-marked. The above example thus confirms the view that whether or not a certain referent is focal is determined independently of its pragmatic property in the discourse (i.e. active, inactive, identifiable, etc.).

Let us now turn to the examples in (22). It seems that all the propositions of the sentences with *ka*-marked active referents in the passage are interpreted as reporting events with sentence-focus structures. Among the five active referents marked by *-ka* in the data, the marker *-ka* in the second and the third examples (the first and the second occurrences of *my mother-KA*) seems necessary in the sentences due to their propositions’ strong event-reporting flavor: the first sentence expresses an event of her mom’s coming to Korea and the second sentence expresses an event of her mom’s finding out the truth, both of which are assumed to be unexpected to addressees. Since the propositions of the sentences express unexpected events, the *ka*-marking is necessary in those sentences. In the rest of the examples, on the other hand, it seems that the speaker could do without the marker *-ka*. That is, the speaker could express the sentences

either in topic-comment structures with the active subjects expressed as zero pronouns or bare NPs or in sentence-focus structures expressing unexpected events as she does with the other examples. The choice between these two options depends on how she wants to express the propositions: if she wants to express them as rather surprising events, she will use sentence-focus structures with the marker *-ka* on the subjects, and if her intention is adding some comments to the active referents, she would use topic-comment structures.

The data in (22) thus does not challenge the view that the marker *-ka* is a focus marker in Korean, since it is attached to active referents which are actually not topics but which are in focus. Active subject referents in Korean can be marked by the focus marker *-ka*, if the speaker wants to express an unexpected event by the proposition.

3.2.2 *-ka* as a Continuing-Topic Marker

According to Choi (1998:553), *-ka* can mark continuing topics in Korean. Let us look at the following data from Choi:

- (24) Yeysnal-ey han maul-ey Swuni-lanun **ai-ka** salassta.
 past-in one village-in Swuni-named child-NOM lived
Swuni-ka halwunun yeph maul-ey nollekassta.
 Swuni-NOM one.day next villaga-to went
 ‘Once upon a time, there lived **a child (ka)** named Swuni in a village. One day **Swuni (ka)** went to a neighboring village.’
- (25) A:Kobe-eyse **cicin-i** nasse.
 Kobe-in earthquake-NOM broke.out
 ‘There was **an earthquake (ka)** in Kobe.’

B: **Cicin-i** encey nass-e?
 earthquake-NOM when broke.out-Q
 ‘When did **the earthquake (ka)** happen?’

In (24), the first sentence, which newly introduces a referent “Swuni,” is uttered discourse-initially, so it does not have any presuppositions: the sentence has sentence-focus structure (it is a presentational sentence (see section 5.2), and thus the *ka*-marking is required as a sentence-focus marker). However, notice that the same referent is active and still *ka*-marked in the second sentence. Based on the fact that this *ka*-marked referent is active, Choi claims that it is a continuing topic and that *-ka* sometimes marks a continuing topic in Korean. Likewise in (25), Choi argues that while the referent of the *ka*-marked subject NP that is newly introduced into the discourse is focal, that of the same NP in the second sentence is active and plays the role of a continuing topic.

Choi (1998: 551) acknowledges that *-ka* can also mark argument focus and sentence focus in Korean, which she calls “presentational” and “focus” readings respectively, and she points out that a focus reading (i.e. an argument-focus reading) does not necessarily involve a discourse-new referent: the focus argument in an argument focus reading may be either discourse-old or discourse-new. Except for the case of argument focus, however, she regards the other cases of active referents with *ka*-marking as continuing topics. Though Choi claims that the second sentence in (24) has a topic-comment interpretation, it is undeniable that it has a strong event-reporting flavor; the speaker, in fact, expresses an event of the child going to a neighboring village by the sentence rather than a comment about the child. Likewise in (25B), the open proposition “The earthquake happen at some time X” expresses a surprising event; the speaker is expressing unexpectedness of the event. Thus, as in the case of (22), the sentences have

sentence-focus structures in which the subject referent is *ka*-marked and cannot be interpreted as a topic.

3.2.3 Scrambling as an Indicator of Argument Focus

Following Kratzer (1989) and Diesing's (1992) distinction between individual-level and stage-level predicates, Kim (1990) and Choi (1998) argue that subject NPs marked with *-ka* have different focus interpretations depending on their predicate types; if the predicate is individual-level, the sentence is interpreted only as argument focus, but if the predicate is stage-level, the sentence is interpreted as either argument focus or sentence focus. To support her argument, Choi (1998) gives the following examples:

- (26) a. **Mary-ka** John-ul mannako issta.
Mary-NOM John-ACC meeting is
'There's **Mary (ka)** meeting John.'
'It is Mary (not others) who is meeting John.'
- b. **Mary-ka** ttokttokhata.
Mary-NOM be.smart
'It is **Mary (ka)** who is smart.'

As the English translations of the sentences indicate, (26a), which has a stage-level predicate, has two readings while (26b), which has an individual-level predicate, has only one: (26a) is interpreted as having either a sentence-focus reading (Choi calls it a "presentational" reading) or an argument-focus reading, and (26b) is interpreted as having an argument-focus reading. According to Choi (1998), the reason that the two

sentences have different interpretations is due to the different positions of their subjects in the syntactic structures. That is, the subject of an individual-level predicate is positioned in the Spec of IP, but the subject of a stage-level predicate is positioned either in the Spec of VP or in the Spec of IP by scrambling (Kratzer 1989; Diesing 1992). Assuming that the Spec of IP position is “an automatically scrambled position” (p 552), Choi suggests that an argument-focus reading is achieved by scrambling.

Now, consider the following examples from Choi (1998):

- (27) a. Yetnal-ey han maul-ey Swuni-lanun **ai-ka** salassta.
 past-in one village-in Swuni-named child-NOM lived
 ‘Once upon a time, there lived **a child named Swuni (ka)** in a village.’

- b. #¹⁶Swuni-lanun **ai-ka** yetnal-ey han maul-ey salassta.
 Swuni-named child-NOM past-in one village-in lived
 ‘Once upon a time, there lived **a child named Swuni (ka)** in a village.’

- (28) a. Chayksang-wiey **chayk-i** nohye issta.
 desk-on book-NOM lie be
 ‘There are/is **books/a book (ka)** lying on the desk.’

- b. **Chayk-i** chayksang-wiey nohye issta.
 book-NOM desk-on lie be
 ‘It is **books/a book (ka)** that are/is on the desk.’

According to Choi (1998), a presentational reading involves the introduction of a referent into a discourse, and the sentences in (27) are constructions which force a presentational

¹⁶ The symbol # indicates the sentence is pragmatically odd.

reading. Assuming that the unmarked position of the subject in a presentational construction is not sentence-initial, she argues that (27b) is odd because the *ka*-marked subject is scrambled forcing an argument-focus reading, while (27a) with an unscrambled subject is OK. Similarly in (28), which Choi calls “existential construction,” (28a) has a presentational reading, while (28b), which has a scrambled *ka*-marked subject, can have only an argument-focus reading. (She assumes that the base position of the subject of the existential construction is not sentence-initial.)

If we look at other Korean examples, however, it is noted that scrambling cannot determine whether a certain sentence with *ka*-marked subject is interpreted as presentational or argument focus. First, *ka*-marked NPs whose referents are first introduced into a discourse can appear sentence-initially. Let us see, for example, the following sentence that could be used in a situation where a boy starts to tell his friends about a strange man who visited his house yesterday:

(29) (CS: 5) 어떤 사람이 어제 우리 집에 왔는데...

Etten salam-i ecey wuli cip-e wass-nunte ...

Some person-NOM yesterday our house-to came-and

‘**A person (ka)** came to our house yesterday and ...’

The sentence in (29) is interpreted as “presentational,” since the speaker is introducing a new referent (a person) into a discourse. Unlike Choi’s example in (27a), however, the *ka*-marked subject in (29) is scrambled but still acceptable. (The reason that (27a) is odd seems to be due to a convention of Korean story-telling; when people start a story using the expression *yetnaley* ‘once upon a time,’ it is conventionally placed at the beginning of the story.)

Next, the sentence in (28a), which is argued by Choi to have only a presentational reading, can have an argument-focus reading in a certain context. Consider:

(30) A: Chayksang-wiey mweka iss-ni?

Desk-on what be-Q

‘What is on the desk?’

B: Chayksang-wiey **chayk-i** nohye issta.

desk-on book-NOM lie be

‘It is **books/a book (ka)** that are/is on the desk.’

In (30), sentence (30B) is uttered as an answer to the *wh*-question, and the referent of the *ka*-marked NP *chayki* is the focus argument which fills the gap in the open proposition. So the sentence should have an argument-focus reading. The examples in (29) and (30) thus show that the difference between presentational and argument-focus readings cannot be attributed to “scrambling.”

Chapter 4 Topic Constructions in Korean

In this chapter, various types of topic constructions in Korean will be introduced, those involving zero pronouns, bare NPs, NPs marked with the marker *-nun*, the *maliya*-construction, and right-dislocation construction. As mentioned earlier, topic is a referent which a proposition is about, so it should be kept in mind that in every topic construction which will be discussed in this section, the topic of a sentence is what the proposition expressed by the sentence is about. This entails that the role of the topic is the same in all of the different topic constructions. Then, why do we have so many different topic constructions in Korean? The following sections will examine each case of a topic construction and its discourse contexts.

4.1 ZERO PRONOUNS

It is well-known that topics are often unexpressed in Korean sentences (e.g. Lee, 1999). Usually, topics are unexpressed in Korean when their referents are active and, by being active, are expected to be the topics of sentences given the lexical content of a proposition. The following data, which have examples of zero pronouns, will show in what context a topic remains unexpressed in Korean:

(31) (AS) Context: The daughters of A and B were exchanged in a hospital when they were born. A and B, not knowing this, raised each other's daughter for 14 years. After finding this out, they meet and exchange questions about their daughters.

A: 신애는 어땠나요? 밥 같은 것 잘 먹었나요?

Sinay-nun ettayssnayo? Ø Pap kathun kes cal mekess-nayo?

Sinay-TOP how.was meal like things well ate-Q

‘How was **Sinae (nun)**? Did **she (Ø)** eat any kind of meal well?’

B: 잘 먹습니다.

Ø Cal meksupnita.

well eat

‘**She (Ø)** eats well.’

In (31A), A, who is the biological mother of Sinae, is asking B, who raised her daughter, questions about the daughter. Note that the topic expression of the first sentence in (31A) has the marker *-nun* and that the topics of the following sentences in (31A) and (31B) are unexpressed. The difference between these two types of topics (*nun*-marked topics and zero pronouns) lies in the fact that, unlike the topic in the first sentence of (31A), the topics in the other sentences are active and expected as topics of the sentences. (I will discuss topics marked with *-nun* in later sections.) As discussed in section 2.5.3, little mental effort is needed to process active topic referents, since they are already available in the discourse, and as a result, they are usually unexpressed in Korean.

Speakers and addressees, like active referents, are usually expressed as zero pronouns in Korean. Since speakers and addressees are present as speech participants in the speech situation, they always have the status of being active. Consider the following data in which a speaker and an addressee are expressed as zero pronouns:

(32) (AS) Context: a husband, who is a professor, is coming back from the school,
and found that his wife is in front of the house waiting for him.

H: 언제부터 나와 있었어? 좀 아까까지 비가 많이 오던데.

Ø Enceypwute nawa issesse? Com akkakkaci pika manhi otente.
since.when come.out be a.little while.ago rain much come
'Since when have **you** (Ø) been here? It rained a lot until a while ago.'

W: 비가 와서 좋아서요. 바람이 많이 불길래 꽃들 넘어질까봐.
학장님은요?

Pika w-ase Ø cohaseyo. Palami manhi pwulkillay
rain come-because feel.good wind much blowing

kkochtul nemecilkkapwa. Hakcangnimun-yo?
flowers fall.down dean-Q

'**I** (Ø) was feeling good because it rained. I was afraid that the flowers might
fall down because of the rain. How was the dean?'

H: 그냥 왔어. 아직 교환교수 갈지 안 갈지도 결정 못 했고. 만나면
말씀 드려야 하잖아.

Ø Kunyangwasse. Ø Acik kyohwankyoswu kal-ci an kal-ci-to
just came yet exchange.professorgo-whether not go-whether-even

kyelceng mos hayssko. Ø Manna-myen Ø malssumtulyeya hacaanha.
decision can't do meet-if tell should

'**I** (Ø) just came back. **I** (Ø) did not decide even whether I should go as an
exchange professor and, if **I** (Ø) see him, **I** (Ø) have to tell him (about my
decision).

The unexpressed topic in the first utterance of the husband is the hearer, and in the wife's utterance, the speaker is unexpressed. All the unexpressed topics in the second utterance of the husband are the speaker, i.e. the husband. It is very important to note that the last sentence of the wife *Hakcannimunyo* 'How was the dean?' and the next sentence by the husband *Kunyang oasse* 'I just came back' show the importance of the role of a predicate in interpreting an unexpressed topic. By her question, the wife is actually asking the husband about the dean, so it may be expected that the husband will give some information about the dean. However, the predicate in the husband's answer actually does not give any information about the dean (the dean is not the topic of the sentence), but it indicates that the referent which is interpreted as the topic of the sentence is the speaker himself. This is a situation in which there is more than one active referent (the speaker, the dean) competing to be the topic of a sentence. In this case, the topic is determined by the predicate; the speaker assumes that the referent of the unexpressed topic is inferred from the semantic content of the predicate.

What if the speaker assumes the predicate alone cannot indicate which of the active referents is the topic of the sentence? In that case, the topic must be expressed in non-zero form. Active topics, thus, can be unexpressed only if they are licensed by predicates; if there is more than one active referent in the discourse competing to be the topic of a sentence, and the semantic content of the predicate does not clearly indicate which is the topic, the topic cannot be unexpressed (see the data in (36) and (37) and the following discussions, in which the predicates do not license zero pronouns).

Even though an active referent has no competitors (i.e. other active referents), and consequently can be unexpressed, it can always be expressed as a bare NP. Consider the following data:

(33) (AS) Context: A daughter (D) visited her mother (M). The mother (M) starts to talk about a middle-aged man who did many good things to the family. He wants to marry the daughter, but the daughter wants to avoid the marriage. The man has continuously visited the family, because he wants to marry the daughter.

M: 김사장 말이다, 오늘두 생선 놓고 가더라. 그 늙은이 너 달라는 건
 끔찍해도 그래도 니 오래비 몇번씩이나 경찰서에서 빼주고, 우리
 가게도... 아냐, 아니다. 내가 미친년이지.

Kimsacang malita¹⁷ onul-to sangsen nohko katela. **Ku nulkuni**
 Kimsacang today-also fish leave go that old.man

ne talanunken kkumccikhay-to kulayto ni olaypi myechpenssikina
 you give be.terrible-though even.so your brother several.times

kyengchalse-eyse ppaycwu-ko wuli kakey-to...
 police.office-from let.released-and our store-also

Anya, anita. Nayka michinnyen-ici.

no no I crazy.woman-be

‘Kimsacang left us fish again today. Even though it is terrible that **that old man** wants to take you (as his wife), he had your brother released from the police office so many times, and also our store... No, no. I am a crazy woman.’

¹⁷ The *maliya/malita/malyeyyo*-construction is another type of topic construction in Korean, which will be introduced and discussed in section 4.4.

D: 엄마, 죄송해요. 하지만 나 그냥 엄마 옆에서 조금만 더 살게
해주세요.

Emma, coysonghayyo. Haciman, **na** kunyang emma yepese cokumman
mom be.sorry but I just mom beside a.little.bit
te salkey haycwu-seyyo.
more live let-please

‘I am sorry, Mom. But please let **me** just live beside you a little bit longer.’

In the above data, the subject of the second sentence of (33M), *ku nulkuni* ‘that old man’ and the subject of the second sentence in (33D) *na* ‘I’ are bare NPs. However, it should be noted that even if they were unexpressed, the referents of these NPs would still be well understood by the addressee, because the predicates clearly indicate what the subjects of the sentences are. That is, these two NPs could be unexpressed without giving any difficulty to the addressee in identifying their referents.

In principle, every zero pronoun can be replaced by a bare NP in Korean (but not vice versa, see section 4.2) without affecting the acceptability or changing the meaning of the sentence in the discourse. For example, in the sentences in (31) and (32), the zero pronouns could be replaced by bare NPs. As shown in the English translations in (31) and (32), every zero pronoun in Korean is translated as a pronoun in English, so we may expect that, if zero pronouns are replaced by bare NPs, the bare NPs would be overt pronouns in Korean. However, Korean is a language whose pronoun system is not well-developed. Korean has the first-person pronouns *na* and *ce* and the second-person pronoun *ne*, but as the data will often show, in many situations, proper names, family relation terms (e.g., *emma* ‘mother,’ *hyeng* ‘brother,’ *enni* ‘sister,’ etc.) and title names

(e.g., *sacangnim* ‘head of a company’ *sensayngnim* ‘teacher,’ etc.) play the role of first-person, second-person, and third-person pronouns in Korean. Furthermore, there are no proper third-person pronouns in spoken Korean, and in addition to the NP types mentioned above, NPs like *ku salam* ‘that person’, *ku namca* ‘that man’ *ku ai* ‘that child,’ etc. are frequently used where English would use the third-person pronouns.

With this in mind, let us replace the zero pronouns in (31) with bare NPs to see what type of nouns play the role of pronouns in Korean. The following is a revised version of (31) with every zero pronoun replaced by a bare NP:

(34) (CS: 5) A: 신애는 어땠나요? 신애 밥 같은 것 잘 먹었나요?

Sinay-nun ettayss-nayo? **Sinae** pap kaun kes cal mekess-nayo?

Sinae-TOP how.was-Q Sinae meal like things well ate-Q

‘How was Sinae? Did she eat any kind of meal well?’

B: 그애 잘 먹습니다.

Ku ay cal meksupnita.

that kid well eat

‘She eats well.’

In (34), the zero pronouns in (31) are replaced by a proper name (*Sinae*) and *ku ay* ‘that child.’ All of these NPs are used as third-person pronouns referring to the same person (i.e. *Sinae*). The examples in (33) and (34) indicate that if a zero pronoun is replaced by a bare NP, it should be expressed as either an overt pronoun or one of the NP types which play the role of pronouns in Korean.

The fact that (31) and (34) can be used exactly in the same discourse situation supports the claim that every zero pronoun can be replaced by a bare NP in Korean. It is

true that (31) is more preferred than (34) in this situation, but it should be emphasized that (34) is also pragmatically possible.

4.1.1 Discourse-Initial Zero Pronouns

In the previous section, we have seen that all referents expressed as zero pronouns are discourse-active. However, as we will see in this section, we find zero pronouns in discourse whose referents are not active. Consider the following example:

(35) (AS) Context: C is B's friend, and she visited B's house. When C left B's house, B went out with C to see her off. Some time later, B came back to his house. A, who saw B and C leaving the house, is now talking to B.

A: 갔어요?

Ø Kass-eyo?

went-Q

'Did **she** (Ø) go?'

B: 태석이가 바래다준대.

Taysekika palaytacwu-nday.

Taysek take.home-I.heard

'Taysek said he will take her to her home.'

In (35A), the subject of the sentence is unexpressed, even though its referent is introduced for the first time in the discourse. So, strictly speaking, we cannot say that the referent of the unexpressed zero pronoun is active. However, it is textually accessible,

since B's friend was present in the previous discourse situation. Then, why is the referent expressed as a zero pronoun in (35A) if the topic referent is not assumed to be currently in the consciousness of the addressee? A possible scenario is that we are dealing with a case of pragmatic accommodation of presuppositional structure. That is, since a zero pronoun is usually used for an active referent, the sentence (35A), which has a zero pronoun, would have a presuppositional structure such that the referent of the zero pronoun is active in the discourse. So even though it is not assumed that the referent of the zero pronoun is not active, the speaker, by using a zero pronoun, acts as if she is making that assumption, and the addressee responds to this by acting as if he is thinking about his friend.¹⁸

However, pragmatic accommodation alone cannot explain why the speaker uses a zero pronoun for the topic in (35A). Like other zero pronoun topics, the topic can be unexpressed only if it is licensed by the predicate; if the addressee cannot identify its referent with the help of the predicate, it should be expressed as a non-zero form. Let us reconsider the context in which the first sentence of (35) is uttered. According to the context, B went out with his friend (C), and he just got back home. In this situation, it is easy for the addressee to supply the referent of the unexpressed subject since the semantic content of the predicate *kasseyo* clearly indicates that its subject topic is B's friend, and this is why the topic can remain unexpressed.

In the following section, I will describe in more detail the discourse contexts in which bare NPs can occur in Korean. As mentioned above, every zero pronoun (including discourse-initial zero pronouns) can in principle be replaced by a bare NP, and

¹⁸ A quite similar example is found in English (Lambrecht, 1994:348). At the end of a linguistic conference in London, Charlse Fillmore was invited by his fellow linguist to a famous fish restaurant. But he had to decline the invitation. Five years later, Fillmore met the same linguist at another conference, and greeted him with the following question: "How was it?" And the answer was "Excellent." The fact that the addressee has no difficulty interpreting the pronoun in the question can only be explained by presupposition accommodation.

we have already seen one discourse context in which bare NPs are used. We will see in the next section that there are two distinct types of discourse situation where bare NPs are used. One is the situation in which bare NPs are not necessarily needed, i.e. situations where zero pronouns could be used instead of bare NPs; the other is the situation in which bare NPs cannot be unexpressed. Since we have already seen some examples of the first situation, I will mainly look at the second situation in the next section.

4.2 BARE NPS

Like zero pronouns, bare NPs are used usually when their referents are active. However, unlike the case of a zero pronoun, where the addressee can identify the referent of the zero pronoun, a bare NP is used when its referent is not easily identified by the denotatum of the predicate. One reason that an active topic referent is not easily identified would be the following: there is more than one active referent competing to be the topic of a sentence, and the semantic content of the predicate is not informative enough for an addressee to determine any of the active referents invariably as the topic of the sentence. (This is precisely the case in which the predicate does not license a zero pronoun.) Consider the following data in which a bare NP cannot be unexpressed:

- (36) (AS) Context: A and B are cousins who met again after 20 years. A stayed in a hotel where B is working as a maid.

A: 은서야, 어떻게 살았니?

Unse-ya, ettekhe salass-ni?

Unse-VOC how lived-Q

‘Unse, how did you live?’

B: 잘 살았어요. 엄마, 오빠 다 잘 해주고. 우리 오빠 여전히 싸움하고
그래요. 그렇지만 날 때리거나 그러는 건 아니니까.

Cal salasseyo. Emma, oppa¹⁹ ta cal haycwuko.
well lived mom brother both well treat

Wuli oppa yecenhi ssawumhako kulayyo.
our brother still fighting do

Kulechiman nal ttaylikena kulenunken aninikka
but me hit do not

‘I have been living well. Mom, brother were both good to me. **My brother** is still
fighting around. But he does not hit me.’

In B’s second sentence, her mother and her brother are introduced into the discourse, and by the time she utters the third sentence, we have at least two referents (her mother and her brother) competing for the topic of the next sentence (at most 4 referents if we include the speaker and the addressee). But the semantic content of the predicate *yecenhi ssawumhako kulayyo* ‘still fighting around’ cannot by itself designate which of the four active referents is the topic of the sentence; if the VP were expressed alone, the sentence would be pragmatically odd since it will cause ambiguity for the addressee. That is, if the

¹⁹ Note that the two referents “B’s mother” and “B’s brother” are expressed as bare NPs even though they are introduced into the discourse for the first time (i.e. not active). Like the discourse-initial bare NP *ni olaypi* ‘your brother’ we will see in (38), these examples involve a case of pragmatic accommodation of presuppositional structure; by using bare NPs, the speaker acts as if she assumes that the referents (the mother and the brother) are active in the addressee’s mind. See example (38) and discussion.

subject NP *wuli oppa* ‘my brother’ were not expressed, the addressee would have trouble finding the referent of the missing subject. Thus, in (36B) the bare NP *wuli oppa* is used.

Let us look at another example of a bare NP that cannot be unexpressed. Consider the following:

(37) (RB) Context: Father (F) and Mother (M) are in a room where the glass of a picture frame is broken. The daughter (D) went out to get a broom. Cleaning the broken bits, M hurt her finger. Now, the daughter is coming back with a broom. She does not know who is hurt yet.

F: 연고 좀 찾아와.

(to D) Yenko com chac-a-wa.

ointment please look.for-and-come

‘Please go and get some ointment.’

D: 엄마 다쳤어요?

Emma tachyess-eyo?

mom be.hurt-Q

‘Is **Mom** hurt?’

M: 별 거 아니야

Pyel ke aniya.

unusual thing not

‘It is nothing.’

In (37D), the referent of the bare NP *emma* ‘mom’ is active since it is one of the addressees. However, it cannot be expressed as a zero pronoun, because there are two candidates that could be interpreted as the referent of the zero pronoun: the father and the mother. To avoid the ambiguity that may be caused by the use of a zero pronoun, the speaker has to use a bare NP.

Bare NPs are also used discourse-initially. As in the case of discourse-initial zero pronouns, a speaker uses a bare NP discourse-initially when he assumes presupposition accommodation can apply. But even in the discourse-initial position, the difference between a zero pronoun and a bare NP still exists: when a speaker thinks the predicate alone is not enough for the addressee to identify the referent, he cannot omit the topic expression but has to express it as a bare NP. The following data shows an example of a discourse-initial bare NP:

- (38) (AS) Context: Both the mother (M) and her daughter (D) know that D’s brother is looking for D. He quarreled with his mother and left home in anger before D got home. D does not know what happened at home between her mother and her brother. Now, M is telling D that her son was angry and left home because he could not find her.

M: 니 오래비 혼자 길길이 뛰다가 나갔어.

Ni olaypi honca kilkilhi ttwi-taka nakasse.
your brother by.himself furiously jump-and went.out
‘**Your brother** was very angry before he left here.’

D: 나 오늘 여기서 잘게요.

Na onul yekise ca-lkeyyo.

I today here sleep-will

‘I will sleep here today.’

Strictly speaking, the referent of the bare NP *ni olaypi* ‘your brother’ in (38M) is not active since it is introduced discourse-initially; it may be considered inferentially accessible due to the schema or the semantic frame of the family (M, D, and D’s brother belong to the same family). Instead of using an NP form for a non-active topic (see section 4.3. and 4.4), however, the speaker employs a bare NP, which usually encodes an active referent in Korean. Thus the bare NP example in (38M) is showing another example of presupposition accommodation; by using a bare NP, the speaker acts as if she assumes that the referent is active in the addressee’s mind, and the addressee shows her cooperativeness by acting as if she is presently thinking of the referent (her brother).

However, the speaker cannot leave the subject referent unexpressed since she thinks the predicate alone is not sufficient for the addressee to pick up the correct referent. In the above context, D actually does not know what happened between M and her brother. So, if D heard only the predicate part *honca kilkilhi ttwuy-taka naka-ss-e* ‘got angry and left,’ most probably she would not understand the sentence because she could not supply the subject referent. Again in the discourse-initial context, we see the same difference between a zero pronoun and a bare NP as the one we have seen in the other contexts (i.e. non-discourse initial): a speaker uses a zero pronoun for an active (or accessible in discourse-initial position) referent if he assumes that the addressee can identify the referent by the semantic content of the predicate, but if he does not, he has to use a bare NP for the referent.

So far, we have seen the discourse contexts for zero pronouns and bare NPs, and we have shown that both types of topic expression are used when their referents are active. According to the topic acceptability scale in section 2.5.3, the acceptability of the sentences with active referents as topics is the highest on the scale, which means that those referents are the most suitable as topics. Zero pronouns and bare NPs are linguistic devices by which a speaker expresses active topics in Korean. In the next section, I will show how a speaker expresses a referent as a topic which is less accessible than an active referent.

4.3 TOPICS WITH *-nun*

It has been traditionally assumed in Korean linguistics that NPs with the topic marker *-nun* are divided into two distinct categories: contrastive and non-contrastive topics (Kim (1990), Lee (1999, 2002), among others), and most of the research on the marker *-nun* has been focused on finding answers to the question why the same marker has two different functions. In this dissertation, I want to emphasize that topics with the marker *-nun* are just one of several topic constructions in Korean, and I will examine how topics with the marker *-nun* are different from other topic constructions: in what discourse context a speaker chooses a topic with the marker *-nun* rather than other types of topic expressions. The examples of *nun*-marked topics presented in sections 4.3.1 through 4.3.4 will reveal that a speaker uses a *nun*-marked topic when he assumes that it is not salient enough to be expected as a topic in the discourse. In other words, a speaker uses the marker *-nun* to make the topic referent more salient. Thus, an important difference will be noticed between topics marked with *-nun* and the topics discussed in sections 4.1 and 4.2 (topics expressed as a zero pronoun or a bare NP): while the topic status of the latter is easily expected by the hearer, the topic status of the former is not.

4.3.1 Inactive Topics

Unlike zero pronouns and bare NPs, which encode active topic referents, NPs with the topic marker *-nun* are often used to encode inactive topics. Let us consider the following data which have a topic marked with *-nun*.

- (39) (= 18) Context: B is A's secretary, and he came into A's office to get his signature. A knows B is in constant contact with A's big brother, so he is asking B how his brother is doing now.

A: 큰 형님은 잘 계신데요?

Kun hyengnim-un cal kyeysi-nteeyyo?

big brother-TOP well get.along-Q

'Is **my big brother (nun)** doing well?'

B: 아, 예. 다음 주에 본가 사모님 생신이십니다.

A, yey. Tauncwu-ey ponka samonim sangsin-isinita. Olagasi-lke-cyo?

ah yes next.week-in family madam birthday-be go-will-Q

'Ah, yes. Your mother's birthday is next week. Will you go?'

A: 제가 가면 기뻐해 주실래나? 주세요. 어디 싸인하면 되는 거죠?

Ceyka ka-myen kippehaycwusi-lay-na? Cwu-seyo.

I-NOM go-if be.glad-would-Q give-please

Eti ssainha-myen toy-nunke-cyo?

where sign-if be.OK-Q

'If I go, would she be happy? Please give it to me. Where should I sign?'

The conversation in (39), which was introduced as (18) in section 3.1.1, happens between a boss of a company and a secretary. Because (39A) is the first sentence of the conversation, the referent of the NP *kun hyengnim* ‘big brother’ in (39A) is not active: the speaker does not assume that the addressee is thinking about the referent. As this example shows, one of the functions of the topic marker *-nun* is that it introduces a referent that is inactive as a topic. However, the referent should not be brand-new to the addressee, nor should it be merely identifiable: it is assumed that there should be a certain degree of accessibility to the addressee.

In his discussion on identifiability of discourse referents, Lambrecht (1994:87-88) introduces certain referents whose identifiability is due to the fact that they are “more or less permanently stored in the memory of the speaker/hearer.” According to Lambrecht, there are two types of such referents. First, there are certain NPs that have “only ONE referent in the universe of discourse of the interlocutors or of the speech community as a whole which can be appropriately designated with those NPs.” The examples of such NPs with unique referents are expressions like *the sun*, *the President of the United States*, proper names like *John*, generic NPs, etc. Secondly, there are NPs whose referents are “uniquely identifiable because of some shared knowledge between the speaker and the addressee.” The examples of such NPs are expressions like *the kids*, *the cleaning lady*, *the car* as used by family members, and their referents are always uniquely “identifiable because it has a salient status in the pragmatic universe of the speaker and the hearer.” In both cases, the referents of those expressions are “more or less permanently stored in the memory of the speaker/hearer and can be retrieved without difficulty at any particular time.” Inactive topic referents that can be introduced with the marker *-nun* in Korean coincide with those types of referents (referents that are more or less permanently stored in the mind of the speaker and the hearer).

With the above condition for inactive topics with *-nun* in mind, let us consider again the topic referent “my big brother” in (39). Since the topic is A’s brother and in constant contact with B, he may well be considered to be permanently stored in the mind of A and B. However, being permanently in the mental world of a speaker and an addressee is not enough for a certain inactive referent to be expressed as a topic with *-nun*. Like other topics, it should have a relevant context to be used as a topic; if a certain inactive referent is to be relevantly used as a topic in a context, the referent, in that particular context, should be assumed to have a certain degree of pragmatic accessibility to the interlocutors. The relevant context for A to use his big brother as a topic in (39) is that B is in constant contact with A’s big brother.

Let us look at another example of an inactive topic with *-nun*.

(40) (AS) Context: A and B are friends, and A has found out that B is dating a new girl. A is jokingly asking what B is going to do with A’s sister (Sinay), who once was B’s girlfriend. Yumi is A’s girlfriend, and B also knows Yumi well since they all studied art together in America.

A: 너 신애 어떡하고 바람피냐?

Ne Sinay ettek-ha-ko palamphi-nya

you Sinay what-do-and cheat-Q

‘You cheated on Sinay. What are you going to do with Sinay?’

B: 너까지 왜 그래? 유미는 잘 지내?

Ne-kkaci way kulay? **Yumi-nun** cal cinay-e?

you-even why so.do Yumi-TOP well get.along-Q

‘Why are you talking about that? Is **Yumi (nun)** doing well?’

A: 그럼.

Kulem

of.course

‘Of course.’

B: 너랑 유미랑 같이 미국에서 미술할 땐 정말 좋았는데.

Ne-lang Yumi-lang Mikwuk-eyse miswul-hal-ttayn cengmal cohassnunde

you-with Yumi-with America-in art-do-when really was.good

‘When I was doing art with you and Yumi in America, it was so good.’

In B’s first utterance in (40), the referent of the topic expression *Yuminun* is introduced for the first time in the discourse, and it is obvious from the previous context that B is not assuming that A is thinking of the referent at the time of utterance (i.e. the referent is not active); A and B have been talking about A’s dating a girl. Though the person called Yumi is not discourse-active, it is noted from the context that she is a close friend to both A and B. (All of them studied art together at the same school in America.) So it may be assumed that the person named Yumi is one of the referents permanently stored in the mind of the speaker and the hearer. Also in this particular situation, in which A and B are talking about dating a girl, we notice that Yumi, who is A’s girlfriend, is relevant as a topic. Thus, she is expressed as a *nun*-marked NP in (40).

Finally, consider the following example, which has three topic expressions with *-nun* (This example was introduced as (19) in section 3.1.1.):

- (41) (= 19) Context: A and B are friends since they studied art together in America. A visited a hotel where B is staying. The owner of the hotel is B’s father, who ordered B to stay at the hotel because he wanted his son to

learn how to manage a hotel. A met B met on a golf course which is near the hotel. They left the golf course and now they are eating dinner at a restaurant. A knows that B wants to leave the hotel.

A: 잘 버티고 있네?

Cal petigo issney?

well endure be

‘You are patient enough.’

B: 버텨야지. 아버진 나 좋아하잖아. 형들이 가끔 내려와서 괴롭히는 거 외엔 뭐. 어, 직원들은 아직 몰라. 오너 아들이 일 배우러 내려 왔다 그럼 복잡하니까.

Pethye-yaci. **Apeci-n** na coahacanha. Hyengtul-i kakkum
stand-should father-TOP me likes brothers-NOM sometimes

naylyewase koylophinunke oyeyn mwe. E, **cikwentul-un** molla.
come.down tease except O.K ah employees-TOP don't.know

One atuli ilpaywule naylye wassta kulem pokcaphanikka.

owner son job.learn down come if be.complicated

‘I have to be patient. **My father (nun)** likes me. It is OK to stay in this hotel except that my brothers sometimes come over here and give me trouble. Ah, **the employees (nun)** do not know I am a son of the owner. If they knew I came down to learn my job, it would make it a little complicated.’

A: 일 배워? 골프만 친다며?

Il paywe? Kolpu-man chin-tamye?

job learn golf-only play-I.heard

‘Are you learning your job? I heard you are playing only golf?’

B: 직업이 골퍼데? 프로 자격증 보여줘?

Cikepi kolphe-nte? Phulo cakyekcung poye-cwe?

my.job golfer.be pro license show-Q

‘I am a professional golfer. Do you want to see my license?’

A: 미술은?

Miswul-un?

art-TOP

‘What about **art (nun)**?’

B: 미술만 안하면 다 된대잖아. 맛있네. 최씨 아줌마나 하나 시켜
내려 보내줄까?

Miswul-man anha-myen ta toy-ntaycanha. Massissne.

art-only not.do-if everything be.OK-I.heard be.delicious

Choy-ssiacwummana hana sikye naylye ponay-lkka?

Choi-Mrs. one order down give.send-shall

‘I was told (by my father) that everything is OK except art. It’s delicious. Shall I
order one and send it down to Mrs. Choi?’

In B’s second sentence, the topic referent “my father” is inactive. We can note, however, that this referent is not only identifiable to the interlocutors but also has a salient status in the universe of the speaker and the hearer since he is the father of B and A also knows

him well as his friend's father. So the referent can be easily retrieved at any particular time; it is permanently registered in the mental world of the speaker and the hearer. Also in this situation, in which both of them are talking about B's working at B's father's hotel, B's father is no doubt a good candidate to be chosen as a topic; B's father is relevant as a topic. Another example of this kind of topic is found in the last utterance of A where the referent expressed by *miswulun* 'art' is generic.²⁰ It is clear from the context that the topic referent is inactive. However, as mentioned, a generic referent is one which, by being uniquely present in the universe of discourse, is permanently stored in the memory of the speaker and the hearer, and which can be easily retrieved whenever needed. Also in (41), since A studied art together with B in a college in America and he came to know that B is a professional golfer now, the topic "art" has a relevant context to be expressed as a topic. Both of the topics mentioned in (41) thus have the same discourse properties as the ones discussed in (39) and (40). That is, the topics with the topic marker *-nun* we have seen so far have several common features: i) they are inactive, ii) they are permanently registered in the memory of interlocutors so that they can be easily retrieved, and iii) they are relevant as a topic in the context.

Finally, we can find one more *nun*-marked topic NP *cikwentulun* 'the employees' in B's fourth sentence. Though the referent of this topic NP "the employees" is not active, we notice that it is inferentially accessible due to the semantic frame of the hotel (the speaker is the owner's son), and as will be discussed in detail in section 4.3.2, accessible topics are introduced with the marker *-nun*.

²⁰ According to Gundel (1985), generic referents can appear with overt topic markers in languages which have overt topic markers (cf. Kuno (1972), Gundel (1974), Li & Thompson (1976)).

4.3.2 Accessible Topics

Some non-active referents can be introduced as topics with the marker *-nun*, if they are accessible. Unlike the inactive referents discussed in the previous section, they do not need to be known to an addressee. Consider the following example:

- (42) (= 20) Context: A was working as a telephone operator in a hotel, and B is a son of the owner of the hotel. B loves A romantically, but A is not interested in B. Because B wanted to see A every day, he changed A's position in the hotel without listening to A's opinion. Now A is complaining to B about this. B is swimming in a pool and A is talking to B beside the pool watching B swimming.

A: 개인 메이드라니. 대체 나한테 무슨 감정이예요? 안들리는 척 하지
말아요. 우리 수영장 물속으로 다 마이크 장치 돼있다구요. 나
교환원이지 호텔 정식 직원도 아니라고요. 사람들이 대체 뭐라고
생각하겠어요? 벌써 메이드실 실장님은 절 안 좋게 본다구요. 직원은
손님이랑 소문나면 퇴사란 말이에요. 소문 나면 책임질 거예요?

Kayin meyidulani. Taycey na-hantey mwusun kamceng-i-eyyo?
personal room.service.person on.earth me-to what bad.feeling-be-Q

An tulinun cekhaci malayo. Wuli swuyengcang mwul sokulo ta maiku
not listen pretend don't our pool water inside all mike

cangchitway isstakwuyo. Na kyohoanwen-i-ci hothel cengsil
installed be I telephone.operator-be-but hotel official

cikwen-to anilakwuyo. Salatuli taycey mwelakwu saykakhakeyss-eyo?
employee-even not people on.earth how think-Q

Pelsse **meyidu** **silcangnim-un** nal an cohkey pontakwuyo.
already room.service.person chief-TOP me not good think

Cikwe-nun sonnim-ilang somwun-na-myen toysalanmaliyeyo.
employee-TOP customer-with rumor-happen-if be.fired

Somwun-na-myen chaykimcisil-ke-yeyo?
rumor-happen-if take.responsibility-will-Q

‘A personal room service person? What bad feelings on earth do you have toward me? Don’t pretend you can’t listen. We have mikes installed in our pool. I am a telephone operator, and I am not even an official employee in this hotel. What on earth do people think? **The chief (nun)** of the room service department already does not think I am good. **Employees (nun)** are fired if it is rumored that they have a love affair with customers. If a rumor happens, will you take the responsibility?’

B: 책임 어떻게 지면 되는데? 어떻게 지면 되는데?

Chaykim ettehkey cimyen toy-nunte? Ettehkey cimyen toy-nunte?
responsibility how take-if be.OK-Q how take-if be.OK-Q

‘How can I take the responsibility? How can I?’

The two topic referents expressed by the highlighted NPs in (42A) are not active. Of these two, the first topic (the chief of the department) is not even known to B. However, note that it is inferentially accessible since A is now working in the department; the schema or the semantic frame (Fillmore, 1982) of the service department makes the chief accessible. The second topic “employees” refers to the employees in the hotel, and I think this referent is also accessible in this situation since A is working as an employee in the hotel. Thus both of the two topics marked with *-nun* in (42A) are accessible though they are not active, and they show that the marker *-nun* is used to introduce an accessible topic into a discourse.

The following data show another accessible referent which has the topic marker *-nun*:

(43) (AS) Context: A and B, who are parents of a patient, are asking a question about their daughter’s operation while they sign the consent form, The doctor is wearing an operation suit and he is going to do the operation soon.

A: 수술은 오래 걸립니까?

Swuswul-un olay keli-pnikka?

operation-TOP long.time take-Q

‘Is **the operation (nun)** going to take long?’

B: 등이라면 어떻게 되는 건가요?

Tung-i-lamyen ettehke toynunke-nkayo?

back-be-if how become-Q

‘If you operate on her back, how will it (the operation) be?’

Since the sentence in (43A) is the first sentence in the discourse, the referent of the subject NP *swuswulun* ‘the operation’ in (43A) is not active. But it is inferentially accessible because it is closely related to the doctor and the consent form. That is, due to the semantic frame or the schema of the doctor wearing an operation suit and the consent form of the operation, it may well be assumed that the operation is accessible to the addressee. The speaker expresses this accessible referent as a topic marked with *-nun* in (43A),

The referents of the topics with *-nun* I have discussed in this section and section 4.3.1 are not ranked as the highest on the topic acceptability scale since they are not active. As we saw however, they are not merely non-active; they are either accessible or permanently stored in the memory of the speaker and the addressee. Thus, they can still be chosen by speakers as topics. Compared to active topics, however, they do not have as much salience, and the mental cost for an addressee to process them would be higher. So we can say that they are not as much expected and preferred as active topics by addressees. Due to this insufficient salience, speakers need to add a special marking to those non-active topics. That is, by adding the marker *-nun*, a speaker is making a non-active referent salient enough to be the topic of a sentence. In other words, the marker *-nun* could also be viewed as the signal by a speaker to an addressee that the topic being introduced by the speaker is not salient enough and not fully expected.

4.3.3 Active Topics with a More Salient Topic Already Established in the Discourse

The Korean topic marker *-nun* is attached not only to inactive/accessible topics but also to active topics. As we have seen in sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, active topics are usually expressed as bare NPs or zero pronouns, but sometimes they are also marked with *-nun*. The data I will present below will show examples of active *nun*-marked topics and

reveal the discourse situations in which they occur. Let us first consider the following data:

(44) (AS) Context: A, B, C and D are camping beside a river. They are talking with one another while eating some sandwiches. A's name is Yuncwunse. B is A's fiancée, C is A's friend, and D is A's sister. When A and B met for the first time in New York some years ago, B said she wanted to be a tree.

A: 아까 둘이 무슨 얘길 그렇게 했어?

Akka tuli mwusun yaykil kulehke hays-e?

a.while.ago two.of you what talking that.much did-Q

'What did the two of you (B and D) talk about a while ago?

B: 아, 우리 처음 만난 얘기.

A, wuli ceum mannan yayki.

Ah we first meeting story

'Ah, (we were talking about) the story of our first meeting (A and B).'

C: 아 그 얘기. 다시 태어나면 나무가 되고 싶어요. 은서는 뭐가 되고 싶냐?

A, ku yayki. (imitating B) "Tasi thayena-myen namwuka

Ah that story again be.born-if tree

toyko sipheyo." (to D) **Unse-nun** mweka toyko siph-nya?

become want Unse-TOP what become want-Q

'Ah, that story. (imitating B) "If I were born again, I would want to be a tree." (to

D) What would **you (nun)** want to be (if you were born again)?'

D: 오빠 동생이요.

Oppa tongsayngiyo.

My.brother sister

‘My brother’s sister.’

C: 대단하네 대단해. 좋겠다 윤준서.

Taytanhane taytanhay. Coh-keyssta, Yuncwunse.

be.amazing be.amazing feel.good-must Yuncwunse

‘It’s amazing, amazing. You must be feeling great, Yuncwunse.’

In C’s first utterance, he is reminding other people that B said she wanted to be a tree if she were born again, and then he is asking D the same question (i.e. what she wants to be if she were born again). So, it is obvious that by the time he (C) is asking D, B has become the most salient topic element in the discourse. To be more specific, as far as the matter of “what a person wants to be if born again” is concerned, B becomes the referent which is the most expected to be talked about in next utterances. However, C shifts the topic from B to D, and since D is a topic which is less expected and less salient than B, the speaker needs to have some linguistic tool that will make this less expected and salient topic (D) salient enough. And again, the linguistic tool used by the speaker is the marker *-nun*; as in the case of non-active topics, the marker *-nun* adds salience to a referent which is not salient enough to be a topic, and make the referent a legitimate topic of a sentence. Also note that we are dealing with a case of topic shift in (44) which involves a shift of topic from an active referent to another. As shown in (44), and to be shown in (45), a topic shift from an active referent to another is carried out by the marker *-nun* in Korean.

The following data show another case of a *nun*-marked active topic, which is used in a similar situation to the one in (44):

(45) (AS) Context: F and M are a couple, and S and D (her name is Sinay) are their son and daughter. Quite recently the couple found out that D is their real daughter. D has been brought up by another person. D is now living with her real parents. Unse is the girl the couple have raised for 14 years as their daughter. She is now with her real mother. Today is the birthday of the two daughters, and the family is talking about whether they should invite Unse to D's birthday.

M: 얼른 준비들 해라. 학교 늦겠다.

Elun cwunpitul hayla. Hakkyo nuc-keyssta.

soon get.prepared please.do school be.late-I.am.afraid

'You should get prepared soon. I am afraid you will be late for school.'

D: 엄마, 이따가 학교 끝나고 애들 몇 명 데리고 와?

Emma, ittaka hakkyo kkuthna-ko aytul myechmyeng teliko w-a?

Mom later school finish-and friends how.many bring come-Q

'Mom, how many friends should I bring after school?'

M: 맘대로 해. 아예 다 데리고 오던가. 그럼 은서는...

Mamtaylo hay. Aye ta teyliko otenka. Kulem, Unsenun...

As.you.want do may.as.well all bring come by.the way Unse

'As many as you want. You may as well invite all of your friends. By the way, Unse...'

S: 은서도 오늘 생일이네?

Unse-to onul sayngil-ine.

Unse-also today birthday-be

‘Today is also Unse’s birthday?’

D: 그러게. 은서도 오늘 생일이네. 근데 은서 바쁠지도 몰라요.

Kulekey. Unse-to onul sayngil-ine. Kuntay Unse pappu-lcito molayo.

that.is.right Unse-also today birthday-be but Unse be.busy-may I.guess

‘That’s right. Today is also Unse’s birthday. But, she seems to be busy.’

S: 개가 바쁠 게 어디있어?

Kayka pappul key eti-sse?

that.kid be.busy thing where-be

‘There is nothing she is busy with.’

M: 율까 은서?

O-lkka Unse?

Come-shall Unse

‘Will she come, Unse?’

F: 갈날이 일주일도 안 남았는데 같이 저녁이나 하는 것도 좋겠지.

괜찮지? 신애는 어땡니?

Kannali ilcwulito an namassnuntay kathi cenyekina

days.before.leaving one.week-even not be.left toghther dinner

meknunkessto coh-keyssci. (to everybody) Kwaynchahci? (to Sinay)

eat be.good-will be.OK

Sinay-nun ettehni?

Sinay-TOP how

‘There is not even one week left before us leaving, so it will be good to have dinner together. (to everybody) Is it OK? (to Sinay) What do **you (nun)** think?’

In (45F), the speaker first asks all the addressees (M, S, D) if it is OK to invite Unse to the birthday party, and then he specifically asks D (Sinay) what she thinks about the invitation. So, as far as the issue of inviting Unse is concerned, the most salient and prominent topic established in the discourse when F utters his last sentence (i.e. *Sinaynun ettehni?* ‘How do you think?’) is the three addressees. In his last sentence, however, he shifts the topic from the three people to only D, but the topic D is not as much expected and salient as the three people. So, to add more salience to this topic referent, the speaker adds the marker *-nun* to the topic expression *Sinay*.

The data in (44) and (45) show that the marker *-nun* can be used even for active topic referents and reveal that the discourse context for them is when there are more salient and expected topics already established in the discourse; since those active topic referents are not assumed to be as salient as the already established topics, speakers need to use the marker *-nun*. So the marker *-nun* is necessary for the active topics in (44) and (45). Recall that in the previous section I demonstrated that inactive/accessible topics need to have the marker *-nun* because they are not assumed to be salient enough to be expected as topics due to their non-activeness. Thus, topics with *-nun*, whether active or not, share the following common property, which makes them distinct from other types of topics: they are not assumed to be salient enough to be expected as a topic. Inactive ones are not expected because they are introduced for the first time in the discourse,

while active ones are not expected because there are more expected other topics in the discourse.

4.3.4 Active Topics without a More Salient Topic in the Discourse

In the previous section, it was shown that an active topic is marked with *-nun* when there is a more salient and expected topic already established in the discourse. In this section, I will introduce another kind of active topic expressed with *-nun*, which is distinct from those discussed in the previous section. These active topics with *-nun* are different in the following respect: they do not have more salient and expected topics already established in the discourse, so they actually do not necessarily need the marker *-nun*. That is, they could be expressed in two different ways, i.e. with or without *-nun*, with either case having its own interpretation. Then, why are they expressed with *-nun* even though they could be expressed as bare NPs or zero pronouns like other active topics? The data presented below will reveal the reason why such topics are expressed with *-nun*. Let us consider the following data:

(46) (AS) Context: A is Sinay's teacher and D is her mother. B and C are the parents of another student, who is sitting beside them.

A: 죄송합니다. 전화 좀 받고. 잠시만요.

Coysonghapnita. Cenhwa com patko. Camsimanyo.

I.am.sorry telephone please take just.a.moment

'I am sorry. Let me take the phone please. Just a moment.'

B: 신애 공부 잘 해서 좋으시겠어요.

Sinay kongpwu cal hay-se cohusi-kesseyo.

Sinay study well do-because be.happy-must

‘You must be happy because Sinay is a good student.’

C: 좋으시겠어요.

Cohusi-kesseyo.

be.happy-must

‘You must be happy.’

B: 신애는 형제가 어떻게 됩니까?

Sinay-nun hyengceka ekttekhe toy-pnikka?

Sinay-TOP siblings how become-Q

‘How many brothers and sisters does **Sinay (nun)** have?’

D: 오빠가 하나 있습니다.

Oppaka hana issupnita.

Brother one have

‘She has one brother.’

It is clear from the discourse that the topic expression *Sinaynun* in the second utterance of B has an active referent. (B introduced this referent in her previous utterance.) Moreover, by the time B utters this topic expression, there is no referent which may be considered more salient or more expected as a topic in the discourse, which would require the topic to be expressed with *-nun*. Thus, the topic as an active referent has the qualifications to be expressed as a bare NP in the above discourse situation. Nevertheless, it is expressed with *-nun* rather than as a bare NP.

Why does the speaker choose to express the topic with *–nun* rather than as a bare NP? The reason is that the speaker is thinking of some potential alternative when he makes the utterance and that he chooses the topic over that potential alternative. The potential alternative in the above situation is B's own daughter, who is also present in the above speech situation. B's daughter is in the same class and the same age as Sinay, who is the topic of the sentence. Because the daughter of the speaker is in the speaker's mind together with Sinay at the time of the utterance, and possibly because the speaker is comparing his daughter with Sinay (consciously or unconsciously), the speaker has to express the topic with *–nun* to make it more salient. As I mentioned earlier, however, the topic could also be expressed without the marker *–nun*. If the speaker expressed the topic without *–nun*, it would mean that he is not thinking of any potential alternatives and consequently that the topic is not compared with any potential alternatives. So in this case, the speaker does not need to add more salience to the topic by using the marker *–nun*; the topic is expressed as a bare NP as other active referents. Accordingly, the hearer will interpret the two cases (i.e. with and without *–nun*) differently; if the speaker uses *–nun*, the hearer will assume that the speaker is thinking about an alternative that is compared to the expressed topic, and if the speaker does not use *–nun*, there will be no such assumption.

A quite similar case is also found in English. Let us see the following example from Büring (2003):

(47) Q: What about Fred? What did he eat?

A: FRED_{CT} ate the BEANS_F.

The sentences in (47) are originally from Jackendoff (1972), who gives the context as follows: there were a number of people and a number of different things to eat, and various people ate various things. In (47A), we have two accented elements, *Fred* and *beans*. According to Büring, each of them shows different accent patterns: *Fred* shows a fall-rise accent pattern, and *beans* shows a fall accent pattern. Following Jackendoff (1972), Büring names the fall-rise accent “B accent” and the fall accent “A accent” respectively, and he use the term “focus” to refer to a constituent marked by A accent in English, and the term “contrastive topic” for a constituent marked by B accent. (Note that, in the above example, he uses the subscript F and CT for a focus and a contrastive topic, respectively.) It is very important that, as pointed out by Büring, the accented topic *Fred* in (47A) (see section 4.6 for more discussion on accented topics in English) could be expressed unaccented in the same situation. According to Büring (2003:522-523), “the speaker will typically attribute to the answer $FRED_{CT}$ ate the $BEANS_F$ some sort of indication that other people ate other things.” However, the unaccented version Fred ate the $BEANS_F$ “lacks any such indication.” Thus, “the sentence with a contrastive topic conveys an additional and discourse-related meaning,” and this additional and discourse-related meaning is illustrated by the following CT value of the sentence²¹:

$$(48) [[FRED_{CT} \text{ ate the } BEANS_F]]^c = \{\{x \text{ ate } y \mid y \in De\} \mid x \in De\}$$

(Büring 2003:519)

²¹ In his semantic theory of “alternative semantics,” Rooth (1992) introduces a “focus semantic value” of a sentence that has a focused element. According to Rooth, the focus semantic value of a sentence is “the set of propositions obtainable from the ordinary semantic value by making a substitution in the position corresponding to focused phrase.” Though Rooth treats Büring’s contrastive topics as foci, his “focus semantic value” is quite similar to Büring’s CT value. See Rooth (1985, 1992) for more discussion.

As Büring points out, the CT value in (48) can be thought of as a set of question meanings that includes “What did Fred eat?”, “What did Mary eat?”, “What did John eat?” etc. Clearly, the CT value of the sentence indicates that the speaker conveys additional meaning that other people ate other things.

Consider another example from Büring that has an accented pronominal topic:

(49) Q: Where were you (at the time of the murder)?

A: I_{CT} was at $HOME_F$.

Like in (47), the sentence with unaccented *I* would be equally adequate in the above context. According to Büring, the difference is that, unlike the sentence with unaccented *I*, the speaker may suggest by the accented topic that “other people might not have as waterproof an alibi” (p 524); by the accented topic, the speaker indicates that he takes other people into consideration and that he compares himself with them.

Let us look at another example of an active topic with a potential alternative in Korean. In the following data, the *nun*-marked topic is one of the speech participants:

(50) (AS) Context: B works as a room service person at a hotel, and recently she lost a customer’s expensive watch. She is now searching every trash can with her friend (A).

A: 어우 너는 무슨 그런 말도 안되는 실수를 하니?

Ewu,²² **ne-nun** mwusun kulen maltoantounun silswulul ha-ni?

Ewu you-TOP how such absurd mistake do-Q

‘How can **you (nun)** make such an absurd mistake?’

B: 난 정말 왜 이러니? 왜 이렇게 재수가 없니?

Na-n cengmal way ile-ni? Way ilehkey cayswuka eps-ni?

I-TOP really why like.this-Q why like.this luck do.not.have-Q

‘Why am **I (nun)** like this? Why do I have so much bad luck?’

It is needless to say that the topic expressions *nen* ‘you’ in (50A) and *nan* ‘I’ in (50B) have active referents, since the topics are the addressee and the speaker. As in the case of the topic discussed in (46), it is clear that these two topics do not have more expected and salient topics already established in the discourse. So, the speakers could express the topics without *-nun* without affecting the naturalness of the discourse. Nevertheless, the speakers choose to express them with *-nun*. Why? Like the distinction of accented and unaccented topics in English that we saw in (47) and (49), the answer is because the speakers are considering potential alternatives and compare the topics with those alternatives. Note, however, that unlike the topic “Sinay” in (46), which has a potential alternative in the discourse, there are no specific potential alternatives present in the discourse for the topics in (47); the potential alternatives for them are other people. Thus, in (50A) the speaker compares B with other people, implying that other people would not make such a terrible mistake, and in (50B) the speaker compares herself with other people, implying that other people would not be as unlucky as her. Since the speakers are considering the alternatives (i.e. other people) at the time of utterance and they have to

²² *Ewu* is an exclamatory expression of surprise in Korean.

make the selected topic more salient than the alternatives, they need to use the marker *–nun*. So, the function of the marker *–nun* in this case can be considered to be in line with those in the previous sections: a speaker uses the marker *–nun* to make a topic referent more salient. The insufficient salience of a topic referent which requires the marker *–nun* is thus due to one of the following reasons: it is inactive (cf. section 4.3.1), it is accessible (cf. section 4.3.2), there is a more salient topic already established in the discourse (cf. section 4.3.3), and it has potential alternatives (cf. section 4.3.4).

4.4 THE *MALIYA*-CONSTRUCTION

In sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, we saw that the marker *–nun* can be used for an accessible topic or an inactive topic that is “more or less permanently registered in the memory of the speaker/hearer.” Like the NP-*nun* construction, the *maliya/malita/malyeyyo*-construction²³ (henceforth *maliya*-construction) is used when a speaker introduces such inactive or accessible topic referents into a discourse. As we will see later, however, the *maliya*-construction, unlike the NP-*nun* construction, introduces a topic whose topic status is generally not restricted to one sentence. Let us first look at some examples of a *maliya*-construction. In fact, we can find one in (33) above, the relevant portion of which is repeated as (51) below:

- (51) (AS) Context: A daughter (D) visited her mother (M). The mother (M) starts to talk about a middle-aged man who did many good things to the family. He wants to marry the daughter, but the daughter wants to avoid the marriage. The man has continuously visited the family, because he wants to marry the daughter.

²³ The different forms indicate different levels of addressee honorification.

M: 김사장 말이다, 오늘두 생선 놓고 가더라. 그 늙은이 너 달라는 건
 끔찍해도 그래도 니 오래비 몇번씩이나 경찰서에서 빼주고, 우리
 가게도... 아냐, 아니다. 내가 미친년이지.

Kimsacang malita onul-to sangsen nohko katela. Ku nulkuni
 Kimsacang today-also fish leave go that old.man

ne talanunken kkumccikhay-to kulayto ni olaypi myechpenssikina
 you give be.terrible-though even.so your brother several.times

kyengchalse-eyse ppaycwu-ko wuli kakey-to...
 police.office-from let.released-and our store-also

Anya, anita. Nayka michinnyen-ici.

no no I crazy.woman-be

‘**Kimsacang (maliya)** left us fish again today. Even though it is terrible that that
 old man wants to take you (as his wife), he had your brother released from the
 police office so many times, and also our store... No, no. I am a crazy woman.’

In (51), the topic referent expressed as *Kimsacang* is not active since it appears discourse
 -initially. According to the context, the person named Kimsacang has been in constant
 contact with the family; he did a lot of good things to the family and visited the family
 quite often. Thus we may consider the topic referent more or less permanently registered
 in the mind of the speaker and the hearer, so that it can be easily retrieved whenever

needed. Since the topic referent (the middle-aged man) is introduced in the situation that the man wants to marry the daughter, it can be considered relevant as a topic in the discourse. So the discourse situation in which the topic referent is introduced with *maliya* in (51) is quite similar to that of the inactive *nun*-marked topics we have seen above; when the mother introduces this topic referent into the discourse, she could actually use the marker *-nun* because the topic does satisfy the requirements needed for inactive topics with *-nun* (cf. (53) below).

The following example shows an accessible topic referent introduced with a *maliya*-construction. Consider:

(52) (AS) Context: A and B had a fight a few days ago and B was hit by A. A was Unse's brother until it turned out by a blood test that they are not actually siblings. A is now living with Unse, who is now B's sister. B came to the university where A is teaching, and asks how Unse is doing now.

A: 무슨 일입니까

Mwusun il-i-pnikka?

what matter-be-Q

'What is the matter? (What brought you here?)'

B: 꽤 세던데? 몇 일 아팠어.

Kkway seytentey? Myechil aphasse.

pretty be.strong for.a.few.days be.hurting

'It (your punch) was pretty strong. It was hurting for a few days.'

A: 무슨 일입니까

Mwusun il-i-pnikka?

what matter-be-Q

‘What brought you here?’

B: 은서 말야 잘 지내?

Unse malya cal cinay?

Unse well doing

‘Is **Unse (mailiya)** doing OK?’

A: 은서 만났습니까?

Unse mannnass-upnikka?

Unse met-Q

‘Did you meet her?’

B: 아냐, 잘 지낼텐데 뭐. 여기 근사한 보호자도 있고. 어머니가 아프셔서 말야.

Anya, cal cinay-lthendemwe. Yeki kunsanhan pohoca-to issko.

no well doing-I.guess here decent protector-also be

Emeni-ka aphyseyese-malya.

mother-NOM be.sick-I.am telling you

‘No. I guess she is doing well. Here is a good protector as well. I am here to tell you my mother is sick.’

In the second utterance of B, the topic “Unse” is expressed in a *maliya*-construction. Since A was once her brother and B is her brother now, she may be regarded as inferentially accessible because of the semantic frame of her family. Also, note that she

may be considered one of the referents permanently stored in the mind of both speech participants. Thus the referent of the topic expression *Unse maliya* in (52) is again well qualified to be expressed with *-nun*; if the referent were expressed with *-nun*, the sentence would still be OK in the above situation (see (54) below).

So far, we have examined the discourse contexts in which a *maliya*-construction is used in Korean, and it was revealed that the *maliya*-construction is used for inactive topics that are permanently stored in the mind of speech participants or accessible ones. The discourse contexts of a *maliya*-construction thus show a similarity to those of a *nun*-marked topic; both of the topic constructions can be used to introduce an accessible topic referent or a topic referent that is permanently stored in the mind of the speaker/hearer.

Since both the marker *-nun* and the *maliya*-construction can be used to introduce an accessible/permanently-stored referent into discourse, a question may arise regarding why the speakers choose to use the *maliya*-construction rather than *-nun* in (51) and (52). I already pointed out that those topic referents in the *maliya*-constructions in (51) and (52) could also be introduced with the marker *-nun* without degrading the naturalness of the discourse. This point is well illustrated in (53) and (54) below, which are revised versions of (51) and (52) with the topics with *maliya* replaced by *nun*-marked topics:

- (53) (CS: 5) M: 김사장은 오늘두 생선 놓고 가더라. 그 늙은이 너 달라는
건 끔찍해도 그래도 니 오래비 몇번씩이나 경찰서에서 빼주고,
우리 가게도... 아냐, 아니다. 내가 미친년이지.

Kimsacang-un onul-to sangsen nohko katela. Ku nulkuni
Kimsacang-TOP today-also fish leave go that old.man

ne talanunken kkumccikhay-to kulayto ni olaypi myechpenssikina
you give be.terrible-though even.so your brother several.times

kyengchalse-eyse ppaycwu-ko wuli kakey-to...
police.office-from let.released-and our store-also

Anya, anita. Nayka michinnyen-ici.

no no I crazy.woman-be

‘**Kimsacang (nun)** left us fish again today. Even though it is terrible that that old man wants to take you (as his wife), he had your brother released from the police office so many times, and also our store... No, no. I am a crazy woman.’

(54) (CS: 5) A: 무슨 일입니까

Mwusun il-i-pnikka?

what matter-be-Q

‘What is the matter? (What brought you here?)’

B: 꽤 세던데? 몇 일 아팠어.

Kkway seytentey? Myechil aphasse.

pretty be.strong for.a.few.days be.hurting

‘It (your punch) was pretty strong. It was hurting for a few days.’

A: 무슨 일입니까

Mwusun il-i-pnikka?

what matter-be-Q

‘What brought you here?’

B: 은서는 잘 지내?

Unse-nun cal cinay?

Unse-TOP well doing

‘Is **Unse (nun)** doing OK?’

A: 은서 만났습니까?

Unse mannnass-upnikka?

Unse met-Q

‘Did you meet her?’

B: 아냐, 잘 지낼텐데 뭐. 여기 근사한 보호자도 있고. 어머니가 아프셔서 말야.

Anya, cal cinay-lthendemwe. Yeki kunsanhan pohoca-to issko.

no well doing-I.guess here decent protector-also be

Emeni-ka aphyseyese-malya.

mother-NOM be.sick-I.am telling you

‘No. I guess she is doing well. Here is a good protector as well. I am here to tell you my mother is sick.’

In both (53) and (54), where *nun*-marked topics are substituted for the topics with *maliya* in (51) and (52), the sentences do not cause any pragmatic oddity. Then, why does the speaker choose the *maliya*-construction in (51) and (52)? If we re-examine the discourse

contexts in which the *maliya*-construction is used, we can note that the topics continue their topic status over the following sentences, not being restricted to one sentence. In other words, by using the *maliya*-construction the speakers intend these topics to be talked about more in the following sentences. As we shall see, a speaker's intention to continue a topic in the following sentences is crucial for him to use a *maliya*-construction. Thus, if the sentences with the *maliya*-construction in (51) and (52) were followed by sentences with different topics, the sentences would be pragmatically odd. Suppose the following sentences were used by M in the same discourse situation as in (51):

(55) (CS: 5) M: 김사장 말이다 오늘두 생선 놓고 가더라. #너 오늘 회사에서 잘 지냈니?

Kimsacang malita onul-to sangsen nohko katela. #Ne onul
Kimsacang today-also fish leave go you today

hoaysa--eyse cal cinass-ni?
company-in well did-Q

‘**Kimsacang (maliya)** left us fish again today. Were you doing OK in your company today?’

Note that it is not the first sentence but the second sentence that is pragmatically odd. The reason the second sentence is pragmatically odd is because it has a different topic (“the daughter”) from the one in the previous sentence (“Kimsacang”). In other words, the speaker introduces the topic with *maliya* with an intention to continue its topic status, but he contradicts himself by using another topic in the following sentence. Thus, the above

example supports the view that the speaker's intention is a crucial factor to use a *maliya*-construction. Notice that, if the marker *-nun* were used for the topic instead of *maliya* in (55), the sentence would not have any pragmatic oddity, which shows that the intention of a speaker to continue the topic in subsequent clauses does not necessarily apply in the case of *nun*-marked topics.

If we consider the eight examples of accessible/permanently-stored topics with *-nun* in sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, we can see that the two topics with *-nun* in the first utterance of B ("my father" and "the employees") in (41) and the two topics with *-nun* in (42) ("the chief of the room service department" and "employees") are not intended by the speakers to continue their topic statuses in the subsequent sentences: the speakers introduce the topics for only those sentences which contain the topic expressions. For example, let us consider the topic expressed by *meyidu silcangnimun* 'the chief of the room service department' in (42A). Clearly, the reason A introduces this topic in (42) is not that she wants to talk about the topic as a main character in the discourse; she just wants to give an example of the bad results of B's wrong-doing, which is expressed by the sentence whose topic happens to be the chief of the department. On the other hand, if the topic in (42A) were introduced with the *maliya*-construction, the sentence would be pragmatically odd since the speaker has no intention to talk about the topic in the following sentence.

However, it should be also noted that the other accessible/permanently-stored topics with *-nun* in 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 can be considered to be intended to be continued and range over some of the following sentences by the speakers. Consequently, it would be possible for the speakers to use *maliya*-constructions for the topic expressions such as *Kun Hyengnimun* 'my big brother' in (39), *Yuminun* in (40), *Miswulun* 'art' in (41), and *Swuswulun* 'the operation' in (43), still making the sentences acceptable in the discourse.

So far, we have discussed the difference between the *maliya*-construction and the marker *-nun* that introduce an accessible/permanently-stored topic into a discourse. The discussion leads us to draw the following conclusion: when a speaker introduces an accessible/permanently-stored topic with a *maliya*-construction, he has the intention to continue its topic status in the following sentences in the discourse, but when a speaker introduces an accessible/permanently-stored topic with the marker *-nun*, the speaker does not necessarily have such an intention.

4.5 RIGHT-DISLOCATION

It is well-known that Korean is typologically a SOV language in which the verb is generally placed in the final position of a clause.²⁴ Since the verb marks the clause boundary in Korean, a right-dislocated element in Korean²⁵ is defined as one that is placed after the verb in a clause. The previous works on the right-dislocation construction in French and English (cf. Lambrecht (1987a, 1996) for French, Ward & Birner (1996) and Gundel (1985) for English, and Lambrecht (2001) for French, English, and many other languages) have found that the right-dislocation construction is used for topic referents which are active or “quasi-active.” For example, Ward & Birner (1996), in their discussion on the right-dislocation construction in English, show that referents coded in the English right-dislocation construction are “evoked.”²⁶ However, Ward & Birner do not offer a discourse function of right-dislocation in English, pointing out that there is no consensus regarding the discourse function of this construction. The Korean right-

²⁴ Other SOV languages such as Japanese and Turkish have right-dislocation constructions (see Kuno (1978) for Japanese and Erguvanli (1984) and Zimmer (1986) for Turkish).

²⁵ Since Korean is a pro-drop language, a right-dislocated element usually does not have a co-indexed resumptive pronoun overtly expressed in the preceding clause.

²⁶ “Evoked” is a term used in Prince (1981a), which corresponds to “active” in our classification.

dislocation examples provided in this section will show that, as in English and French, the referents of right-dislocated constituents in Korean are active or “quasi-active.”

Let us look at some right-dislocations in Korean. Consider the following data:

(56) (AS) Context: A and B are friends and both of them are working in the same hotel. Recently, B heard a rumor that Hyensilcang was transferred, which A does not know yet. Hyensilcang was A’s boss, who fired A several weeks ago. A resumed her job and came to her work today, but she couldn’t see Hyensilcang.

A: 근데, 아까 분위기가 왜 그래? 현실장님도 안 보이고.

Kundey akka pwunwuikika way kulay?
by.the.way a.little.while.ago atmosphere why like.that

Hyensilcangnim²⁷-to an poiko.

Hyensilcang-also not be.seen

‘By the way, why was the atmosphere like that a little while ago? Also, I couldn’t see Hyensilcang.’

B: 어머, 몰랐니? 현실장님 수영장으로 갔어.

Eme, molass-ni? Hyensilcangnim swuyengcang-ulo kasse.

oh did.not.know-Q Hyensilcang swimming.pool-to went

‘Oh, didn’t you know that? She went (was transferred) to the swimming pool department.’

²⁷ *-nim* is an honorific suffix.

A: 수영장? 외부 사업팀이잖아.

Swuyengcang? Oypwu saepthim-i-canha.

Swimming.pool outside business.team-be-as.you.know

‘Swimming pool? It is an outside-business team, you know.’

B: 이거지 이거.

Ikeci ike.

this this

‘That means this (with a gesture that means Hyensilcang was fired).’

A: 왜?

Way?

why

‘Why?’

B: 몰라. 들리는 말로는 새로 온 이사한테 찍혔대.

Mola. Tulinun malonun sayloon isahatey ccikhyesstay.

do.not.know rumor according.to new.coming director-by be.turned.against

‘I don’t know, but there is a rumor that a new director turned against her.’

A: 어머 어떡해. 나쁘다 그 이사.

Eme ettekhay. Napputa, **ku isa.**

Oh my.goodness be.bad that director

‘Oh my goodness! He is bad, **that director.**

B: 야 너한테 잘 됐지. 현실장 안 찼렸으면 너 복귀됐겠냐?

Ya ne-hanteyn cal twayssci. Hyensilcang an ccalyess-umyen ne

hey you-to well become Hyensilcnag not be.fired-if you

pokkwitwayss-kessnya?

resume.job-you.think

‘It is good for you. If she had not been fired, do you think you could have resumed your job?’

In the fourth utterance of A, the topic NP *ku isa* ‘the director’ is right-dislocated. The referent expressed by this right-dislocated NP is active since it was mentioned immediately before.

Let us look at another example of a Korean right-dislocation construction. The data in (45), which I presented above, happen to have an example of a right-dislocated NP. I repeat the data as (57) below for convenience with the right-dislocated topic expression highlighted:

(57) (AS) Context: F and M are a couple, and S and D (her name is Sinay) are their son and daughter. Quite recently the couple found out that D is their real daughter. D has been brought up by another person. D is now living with her real parents. Unse is the girl the couple have raised for 14 years as their daughter. She is now with her real mother. Today is the birthday of the two daughters, and the family is talking about whether they should invite Unse to D’s birthday.

M: 얼른 준비들 해라. 학교 늦겠다.

Elun cwunpitul hayla. Hakkyo nuc-keyssta.

soon get.prepared please.do school be.late-I.am.afraid

‘You should get prepared soon. I am afraid you will be late for school.’

D: 엄마, 이따가 학교 끝나고 애들 몇 명 데리고 와?

Emma, ittaka hakkyo kkuthna-ko aytul myechmyeng teliko w-a?

Mom later school finish-and friends how.many bring come-Q

‘Mom, how many friends should I bring after school?’

M: 맘대로 해. 아예 다 데리고 오던가. 그럼 은서는...

Mamtaylo hay. Aye ta teyliko otenka. Kulem, Unsenun...

As.you.want do may.as.well all bring come by.the way Unse

‘As many as you want. You may as well invite all of your friends. By the way, Unse...’

S: 은서도 오늘 생일이네?

Unse-to onul sayngil-ine.

Unse-also today birthday-be

‘Today is also Unse’s birthday?’

D: 그러게. 은서도 오늘 생일이네. 근데 은서 바쁠지도 몰라요.

Kulekey. Unse-to onul sayngil-ine. Kuntey Unse pappu-lcito molayo.

that.is.right Unse-also today birthday-be but Unse be.busy-may I.guess

‘That’s right. Today is also Unse’s birthday. But, she seems to be busy.’

S: 개가 바쁠 게 어디있어?

Kayka pappul key eti-sse?

that.kid be.busy thing where-be

‘There is nothing she is busy with.’

M: 올까 은서?

O-lkka **Unse?**

Come-shall Unse

‘Will she come, **Unse?**’

F: 갈날이 일주일도 안 남았는데 같이 저녁이나 하는 것도 좋겠지.
 괜찮지? 신애는 어땡니?

Kannali ilcwulto an namassnuntey kathi cenyekina
 days.before.leaving one.week-even not be.left toghther dinner

meknunkessto coh-keyssci. (to everybody) Kwaynchahci? (to Sinay)
 eat be.good-will be.OK

Sinay-nun ettehni?

Sinay-TOP how

‘There is not even one week left before us leaving, so it will be good to have
 dinner together. (to everybody) Is it OK? (to Sinay) What do you think?’

Again, the referent of the right-dislocated topic expression *Unse* in (57) is active since it was previously mentioned.

Finally, consider the following example:

(58) (RB) Context: B is washing dishes, and A is holding a cassette player that is playing some music. A is playing the music to comfort B. Putting the player down on a table, A is now helping B with the dishes.

A: 좋지 이 음악?

Coh-ci i **umak?**

be.good-Q this music

‘Is it good, **this music?**’

B: 응, 좋아.

Ung, Coho.

yes be.good

‘Yes, it’s good.’

In (58), both A and B are listening to the music, and B knows that A plays the music for her (B). So the music, which is expressed as a right-dislocated NP, can be considered active in the above situation. The above example gives another piece of evidence that supports the view that the right-dislocation construction is used for an active referent in Korean.

Recall that active topics are usually encoded by bare NPs or zero pronouns in Korean, and it is indeed possible that the topic referents of the right-dislocated NPs above could be expressed as a preverbal bare NP or even as a zero pronoun. For example, in (56), the topic referent of the right-dislocated NP, i.e. *ku isa* ‘the director’ could be expressed as a preverbal bare NP (it is hard to completely delete the topic expression *ku isa* ‘the director’ since, with the predicate alone, the addressee cannot easily identify the subject topic) without causing any pragmatic oddity or any significantly different interpretation of the sentence in the discourse. The example in (56) thus shows that both a preverbal bare NP and a right-dislocated NP can be allowed in the same discourse situation. However, as Ward & Birner (1996) point out with respect to English right-dislocations, the discourse function of right-dislocation in Korean is not clear; the expression of the active topics in (56), (57), and (58) as right dislocated NPs rather than preverbal bare NPs/zero pronouns lacks an obvious explanation.

4.6 COMPARISON OF THE DIFFERENT TOPIC CONSTRUCTIONS IN KOREAN:

RATIFIED AND UNRATIFIED TOPICS

So far, we have seen five different topic-marking constructions and their discourse contexts in Korean: zero pronouns, bare NPs, *nun*-marked NPs, the *maliya*-construction, and right-dislocation constructions. Though we have five different topic constructions, if we look into their discourse contexts carefully, we will find that some topic constructions are more similar to each other than others. For example, it has been shown that a bare NP in situ can be substituted for a right-dislocated NP. However, it can never be substituted for a NP with *maliya* or a *nun*-marked NP. Also, it has been shown that the topic referent in a *maliya*-construction and that of a *nun*-marked NP can share more common properties (e.g. accessible) with each other than the other topics and that sometimes NPs with *maliya* and *nun*-marked NPs can be substituted for each other (see the examples in (53) and (54)).

Lambrecht (1994) and Lambrecht & Michaelis (1998) divide sentence topics in English and French into two types, i.e. “ratified/established” topics and “unratified/unestablished” topics. According to them, the major criterion of the division is whether or not their status as topics is assumed to be taken for granted by addressees at the time of utterance. It is noteworthy that the same kind of distinction (ratified vs. unratified) can be made regarding different topic constructions in Korean. As we have seen, the referents of zero pronouns, bare NPs and right-dislocated NPs are active, and since they are active their status as topics is assumed to be easily accepted and taken for granted by an addressee. However, the referents of topic NPs in *miliya*-constructions are non-active, and those of *nun*-marked NPs are either non-active or even if they are active, they have more salient topics or potential alternatives in the discourse. Thus, compared to

the referents of zero pronouns, bare NPs, and right-dislocated NPs, their topic status is not assumed to be as easily accepted by addressees. From this observation, it may be proposed that topics in Korean, as in English and French, be divided into two groups according to their different status as a topic: the topic referents of zero pronouns, bare NPs and right-dislocated NPs as “ratified” and those of *maliya*-constructions and *nun*-marked NPs as “unratified.”

In the following sections, different topic constructions, i.e. ratified/established topics and unrated/unestablished topics in French and English will be introduced and distinguished, and the issue of ratified and unrated topics in Korean will be addressed in detail.

4.6.1 Ratified and Unratified Topics in English and French

If a topic referent is active and does not have competitors, it is easily expected and taken for granted by an addressee that the referent will play a topic role. However, if a topic referent is not active or has more salient competitors in the discourse given the lexical content of the predication, its topic role would not be as easily taken for granted by an addressee. According to Lambrecht (1994) and Lambrecht & Michaelis (1998), topics are ratified when their role as topics is assumed to be taken for granted by the addressee at the time of utterance, while in the case of unrated topics, their role as topics is not assumed to be taken for granted. And, it has been shown that these two types of topics are systematically coded differently in English and French (Lambrecht & Michaelis, 1998; Lambrecht 1987a).

First, let us briefly review how ratified and unrated topics are expressed in English. According to Lambrecht (1994, 2000), ratified topics are expressed as unaccented pronominals/lexical nouns (including right-dislocated NPs) in English, while

unratified topics are expressed in the form of accented constituents (including left-dislocated NPs). Consider the following data, which show examples of both ratified and unrated topics in English:

(59) a. A: How is your neck?

B: It/My neck HURTS. (Lambrecht 1994:137)

b. A: How is Mary's family?

B: Her HUSBAND had an ACCIDENT,... (Lambrecht 2000:620)

In B's utterance in (59a), the referent of the subject is a ratified topic because it was mentioned before (i.e. active) and the addressee expects this referent will play a topic role in B's answer. However, in B's utterance in (59b), the referent of the subject is an unrated topic, because the referent is non-active and the addressee expects A's family as a whole to be the topic of the sentence rather than the husband only (It should be noted, however, that the topic referent in (59bB) is accessible due to the semantic frame evoked by Mary's family). Note that these two topics are expressed differently in (59); the active topic is expressed as an unaccented pronoun/lexical NP, while the non-active topic is expressed as an accented lexical NP. Thus, the data show that topics in English can have different formal markings depending on whether they are ratified or unrated; unaccented pronouns and lexical NPs are used to encode ratified topics, and accented lexical NPs are used to encode unrated topics in English.

According to Lambrecht (1994), right-dislocated NPs in English are not accented, and they are regarded as coding ratified topics with their referents being "quasi-active" or active. The ratified status of the referent of a right-dislocated NP is well illustrated in the following example of Ward & Birner (1996):

(60) Below the waterfall (and this was the most astonishing sight of all), a whole mass of enormous glass pipes were dangling down into the river from somewhere high up from the ceiling! *They* really were enormous, *those pipes*. There must have been a dozen of them at least, and they were sucking up the brownish muddy water from the river and carrying way to goodness knows where. (Ward & Birner 1994b:471, quoted from Dahk, R. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, 1964:74-75)

In the second sentence of (60), the referent of the right-dislocated topic NP *those pipes* is active since it was mentioned previously. Because there is no other competing active referent which is more salient by the time of utterance, it is a ratified topic whose topic role is taken for granted by an addressee. As mentioned, however, the discourse function of right-dislocation is not provided by Ward & Birner; they do not explain why the speaker uses right-dislocation in (60).

Unlike right-dislocations in English, left-dislocations are used to mark unratified topics in English. Like right-dislocation constructions, left-dislocation constructions use both prosodic (i.e. presence of a sentence accent) and syntactic means to express the unratified status of topics. Let us consider the following example of an English left-dislocation construction from Lambrecht (1994), which is quoted from Givon (1976):

(61) Once there was a wizard. He was very wise, rich, and was married to a beautiful witch. They had two sons. The first was tall and brooding, he spent his days in the forest, hunting snails, and his mother was afraid of him. The

second was short and vivacious, a bit crazy but always game. Now, **the WIZARD**, he lived in Africa. (p.177)

In the last sentence of (61), the topic NP *the wizard* is left-dislocated. As Lambrecht indicates, the referent of this left-dislocated NP is deactivated at the time of utterance since other referents are newly introduced and activated in the discourse before it is rementioned. Because the referent is in this deactivated state (it is considered only textually accessible), it is viewed as an unratified topic, and the speaker uses the grammatical device of left-dislocation and a sentence accent to mark the unratified status of this topic referent.

The following fragment of the election campaign speech by Ronald Reagan (*San Francisco Chronicle*, August 25th, 1984), which is quoted by Lambrecht (1994), shows another example of left-dislocated NPs, the referent of which is an unratified topic:

(62) We are the party of the new ideas. We are the party of the future. We are the party whose philosophy is vigorous and dynamic. ***The old stereotype of the kind of pudgy, solid, negative Republican*** – there may be a few cartoonists around who still want to portray us as ***that***, but they’re lying through their teeth if they do. (p. 185)

The dislocated NP in (62) is not active since it is introduced for the first time in the discourse, but as Lambrecht points out, the referent is inferentially accessible due to “the relationship of polar opposition between it and the preceding concepts “new ideas,” “future,” “vigorous,” and “dynamic.”” Thus, the topic referent is unratified in (62), and

again it is shown that a left-dislocation construction is used to express an unratified topic in English.

Now, let us see how ratified and unratified topics are expressed in French. Lambrecht (1987a, 1994) shows that ratified and unratified topics in spoken French are also formally distinct: while ratified topics are generally expressed as zero pronouns, unaccented pronominals or right-dislocated NPs, unratified topics are generally expressed as left-dislocated NPs or strong pronouns. The following examples show the different formal markings between ratified and unratified topics in French:

(63) a. A: Comment va ton cou?

‘How is your neck?’

B: Il me fait MAL.

‘It hurts.’

(Lambrecht 1994: 137)

b. Context: a husband is complaining to his wife about the food on his plate.

H: Ça n’a pas de GOÛT, ce poulet.

‘This chicken has no taste.’

W: Le VEAU, c’est PIRE.’

‘Veal is worse.’

(Lambrecht 1987a: 233)

In (63aB), the subject referent is a ratified topic since its topic role is expected at the time of utterance, and the unaccented pronoun *il* is chosen for the subject. However in (63bW), the referent of the left-dislocated NP *le veau* ‘veal’ is not ratified, though it is inferentially accessible from the schema or the semantic frame of ‘meat’ evoked by *ce*

poulet ‘the chicken’ in the husband’s utterance. The unratified status of this topic referent is marked by a left-dislocated NP in (63bW). In (63bH), we can also see a right-dislocated topic in French. Lambrecht (1987a) considers the referents of right-dislocated NPs in French ratified topics, and regarding the referent of the right-dislocated NP *ce poulet* ‘this chicken’ in (63bH), he argues that the referent of this NP is ratified “because of its salient presence in the discourse setting, particularly since in the given situation food is an expected topic of conversation.” Thus, the data in (63) show that French formally distinguishes its ratified and unratified topics.

4.6.2 Ratified and Unratified Topics in Korean: Summary

Now let us look at some examples of ratified and unratified topics in Korean. At the beginning of section 4.6, I proposed that Korean topics be divided into two types according to whether or not their topic status is easily accepted and taken for granted by addressees; the topic referents of zero pronouns, bare NPs, and right-dislocated NPs belong to one type, and those of *maliya*-constructions and *nun*-marked NPs belong to another. These two types of topics correspond to ratified and unratified topics in Korean. That is, the topic referents of zero pronouns, bare NPs and right-dislocated NPs are generally active, and since they are active, their topic role, given an appropriate predicate, is easily taken for granted by the addressee; they are ratified topics in Korean. However, the topic role of the topic referents of *nun*-marked NPs and *maliya*-constructions, due to their being non-active or to the presence of other competing referents in the discourse situations, is generally not taken for granted by the addressee; they are unratified topics in Korean.

Let us review some examples of a zero pronoun, a bare NP, and a right-dislocated NP, and see if their referents are ratified topics in Korean. The examples of a zero

pronoun, a bare NP, and a right-dislocated NP in (31), (37) and (58) are repeated in (64), (65), and (66) respectively:

(64) (= 31) Context: The daughters of A and B were exchanged in a hospital when they were born. A and B, not knowing this, raised each other's daughter for 14 years. After finding this out, they meet and exchange questions about their daughters.

A: 신애는 어땠나요? 밥 같은 것 잘 먹었나요?

Sinay-nun ettayssnayo? Ø Pap kathun kes cal mekess-nayo?

Sinay-TOP how.was meal like things well ate-Q

'How was Sinae (nun)? Did **she** (Ø) eat any kind of meal well?'

B: 잘 먹습니다.

Ø Cal mek-supnita.

well eat

'**She** (Ø) eats well.'

(65) (=37) Context: Father (F) and Mother (M) are in a room where the glass of a picture frame is broken. The daughter (D) went out to get a broom. Cleaning the broken bits, M hurt her finger. Now, the daughter is coming back with a broom. She does not know who is hurt yet.

F: 연고 좀 찾아와.

(to D) Yenko com chac-a-wa.

ointment please look.for-and-come

‘Please go and get some ointment.’

D: 엄마 다쳤어요?

Emma tachyess-eyo?

mom be.hurt-Q

‘Is **Mom** hurt?’

M: 별 거 아니야

Pyel ke aniya.

unusual thing not

‘It is nothing.’

(66) (= 58) Context: B is washing dishes, and A is holding a cassette player that is playing some music. A is playing the music to comfort B. Putting the player down on a table, A is now helping B with the dishes.

A: 좋지 이 음악?

Coh-ci i **umak**?

be.good-Q this music

‘Is it good, **this music**?’

B: 응, 좋아.

Ung, Coha.

yes be.good

‘Yes, it’s good.’

In (64), A is asking a question about Sinay, so it is naturally expected in B's answer that Sinay is the topic of the sentence. Also in (65), the referent of the bare NP *emma* 'mother' is well-expected as a topic in D's utterance since it is one of the two addressees. Finally in (66), the context tells us that A is playing music to comfort B, who is washing dishes. So in A's utterance, the referent of the right-dislocated NP *i umak* 'this musik' is naturally expected as a topic. Thus the above examples show that the topic referents of a zero pronoun, a bare NP, and a right-dislocated NP are ratified topics in Korean.

In contrast, the examples of *nun*-marked NPs and *maliya*-constructions show that the topic status of their referents is not taken for granted by an addressee. Consider the following examples of a *nun*-marked topic and a *maliya*-construction that we saw in (39) and (52) respectively. The relevant portions of (39) and (52) are repeated as (67) and (68) below:

(67) Context: B is A's secretary, and he came into A's office to get his signature.

A knows B is in constant contact with A's big brother, so he is asking B how his brother is doing now.

A: 큰 형님은 잘 계신데요?

Kun hyengnim-un cal kyesi-nteyyo?

big brother-TOP well get.along-Q

'Is my big brother (nun) doing well?'

(68) Context: A and B had a fight a few days ago and B was hit by A. A was Unse's brother until it turned out by a blood test that they are not actually siblings. A is now living with Unse, who is now B's sister. B came to the university where A is teaching, and asks how Unse is doing now.

A: 무슨 일입니까

Mwusun il-i-pnikka?

What matter-be-Q

'What is the matter? (What brought you here?)'

B: 꽤 세던데? 몇 일 아팠어.

Kkway seytentey? Myechil aphasse.

Pretty be.strong for.a.few.days be.hurting

'It (your punch) was pretty strong. It was hurting for a few days.'

A: 무슨 일입니까

Mwusun il-i-pnikka?

What matter-be-Q

'What brought you here?'

B: 은서 말야 잘 지내?

Unse malya cal cinay?

Unse well doing

'Is Unse (mailiya) doing OK?'

In (67), the topic status of the referent "my big brother" cannot be taken for granted by the addressee since it is first introduced into the discourse. Also, for the same reason, the topic status of the referent "Unse" in (68) cannot be taken for granted by the addressee.

The above examples show that the *maliya*-construction and a *nun*-marked topic are used to express unratified topics in Korean. The division of ratified and unratified topics in Korean is illustrated in the following table:

Table 1: Ratified and Unratified Topic Expressions/Constructions in Korean

Ratified topics	Unratified topics
Zero Pronouns	The <i>maliya</i> -Construction
Bare NPs	<i>Nun</i> -Marked NPs
Right-Dislocation	

From the discussion on the topic constructions in English, French and Korean, we may have the following assumptions regarding topic constructions across the languages in the world: i) topics are divided into ratified and unratified topics depending on whether or not their topic status is assumed to be taken for granted by addressees at the time of utterance, and ii) ratified and unratified topics are coded by different formal markings. As we have seen above, English, French and Korean have the distinction of ratified and unratified topics, and these two different types of topics have different formal markings: English uses unaccented pronouns/lexical NPs (including right-dislocated NPs) for marking ratified topics and accented NPs (including left-dislocated NPs) for marking unratified topics, French uses unaccented pronouns or right-dislocated NPs for marking ratified topics and left-dislocated NPs for marking unratified topics, and Korean uses zero pronouns or bare NPs (including right-dislocated NPs) for marking ratified topics and the *maliya*-construction and *nun*-marked NPs for marking unratified topics.

Chapter 5 Focus Constructions in Korean: *-ka* as a Focus Marker

It was pointed out in chapter 3 that there has been disagreement on whether the marker *-ka* functions as a focus marker; some regard it as a focus marker indicating both argument focus and sentence focus (e.g. Jung²⁸ 1990), and others argue that it is focus-neutral (e.g. Choi 1996; Choi & Shimojo 2001), i.e. the NPs marked with *-ka* can be either focus or non-focus. Choi (1996) argues that *-ka* is focus-neutral because it marks both “new and old information” (Her classification of new and old information corresponds to Prince’s (1992) classification of discourse-new vs discourse-old referents.). As will be shown in section 5.3 below, accessible and even active referents can be marked by the marker *-ka* in Korean. However, this does not entail that those referents are not focal, since the focus is defined as the portion in a proposition which contributes to creating an assertion. The focal status of a referent in a proposition is not determined by its pragmatic property (identifiability, activeness etc.) but by its relation to the proposition. That is, the focal and non-focal status of a referent is determined independently of whether the referent is discourse-old (active) or discourse-new (inactive), so both active and inactive referents play a focus role if they contribute to creating an assertion. In the following sections, I will examine focus constructions in Korean, and I will show that the marker *-ka* is used to mark both argument and sentence focus in Korean.

²⁸ Jung (1990) mentions that there are three different interpretations of *-ka*, i.e. “descriptive,” “wh-specific,” and “corrective.” Though he does not explicitly mention that *-ka* is a focus marker, the “descriptive” use corresponds to sentence focus and the “wh-specific” and the “corrective” uses correspond to argument focus.

5.1 ARGUMENT-FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS: -KA AS AN ARGUMENT-FOCUS MARKER

As mentioned in section 2.3, the information structure of argument-focus constructions has an open proposition as its presupposition, and the focus in this structure is the argument which fills the gap in the open proposition. Consider the following data:

(69) (AS) Context: B paged A a little while ago, and A is now calling B back.

A: 호출하신 분 부탁드립니다.

Hochwulhasin pwun pwuthakhapnita.

paging person request

‘I am requesting the person who paged me, please.

B: 아예, 제가 호출했어요. 한태석 친구예요.

Ayey **cey-ka** hochwulhayssuyo. Hantaysek cinkwu-yeyyo.

ah I-NOM paged Hantahaysek friend-be

‘Ah, **I (ka)** did. I am Hantaysek’ friend.’

A: 네, 누가 호출했나 했어요.

Ney, nwu-ka hocwulhayss-na haysseyo.

I.see who-NOM paged-if wondered

‘I see. I was wondering who paged me.’

When A calls B in (69), A assumes that B knows that somebody paged A since A is calling back the number on her pager. So, when A utters her first sentence, the open proposition “X paged A,” which is expressed as a relative clause, is presupposed, and B’s following utterance reveals that the missing argument in the presupposed open proposition is B himself. As discussed above, the argument which completes the open

proposition is the focus, and we notice that the focus is expressed with the marker *-ka* in the sentence. The above example, thus, shows that the marker *-ka* can be used to express argument focus in Korean.

In the following data, we can see another example of *-ka* which indicates argument focus in Korean. Consider:

(70) (AS) Context: A brother and his sister (S) are playing a game called “Kawipawipo.” The brother always wins the game, and the sister is complaining about the result.

S: 이상해. 맨날 내가 지잖아.

Isanghay. Maynal **nay-ka** cicanha.

be.strange always I-NOM lose

‘It’s strange. Always, **I (ka)** lose it.

Since the brother and the sister are playing a game which will determine the winner and the loser, it is naturally presupposed in the situation that one loses and that one wins. So, in S’s second sentence, the proposition “X loses the game” is presupposed, and the referent expressed as *nayka* ‘I’ is the focus of the sentence. Here again, the speaker uses the marker *-ka* to express the argument focus (i.e. the missing element in the open proposition).

As another example of argument-focus structure, a *wh*-question will be shown below. Unlike other argument-focus constructions, however, *wh*-constructions do not have actual referents which would fill the gaps in the presupposed open propositions. So, the focus of a *wh*-question is not an actual referent, and it is just expressed as a *wh*-word,

the assertion being that the speaker wants to know the identity of the missing argument in the proposition (Lambrecht & Michaelis 1998). Despite this difference however, it should be emphasized that all argument-focus structures, whether or not they are *wh*-questions, are defined as such because they have open propositions as their presuppositions. Let us look at the following data, which contain a *wh*-question in Korean:

(71) (AS) Context: a mother (M), looking at a doll in her daughter (D)'s hand, is hitting her, assuming that the daughter took it from a store.

M: 왜 때려? 왜 때리는 거야?

Way²⁹ ttayli-e? way ttayli-nunkeya?

why hit-Q why hit-Q

'Why are you hitting me? Why are you hitting me?'

D: 그 인형 누가 줬냐? 똑바로 말 못해?

Ku inhyeng **nwu-ka** cwuess-nya? Ttokpalo mal mos ha-y?

that doll who-NOM gave-Q straight talking can't do-Q

'Who (ka) gave you the doll? Can't you tell me the truth?'

M: 나쁜 짓 한 거 아냐. 그냥 지난 번에 학교에서 본 은서 아빠가...

Nappun cis hanke anya. Kunyang cinanpeney hakkyo-eyse po-n

bad thing do not just before school-at meet-REL

²⁹ The marker *-ka* generally marks the argument-focus which plays a subject role in a sentence; other grammatical functions (objects and adverbial adjuncts) generally cannot be marked with the marker *-ka*, even if their referents are focal. Thus in M's first utterance in (71), the *wh*-word *way* 'why' cannot be marked with *-ka* because it is an adverbial adjunct.

Unse appa-ka...

Unse's father-NOM

'I didn't do anything bad. **Unse's father (ka)**, whom I saw at school before...'

In (71), the first sentence uttered by the mother is a *wh*-question, which has the open proposition "X gave her the doll" as its presupposition, and it is shown that the *wh*-expression is marked with *-ka* (the *wh*-expression *nwuka* is a contracted form of *nwuku* 'who' + the marker *-ka*). Also note that, in the daughter's answer, the person who gave her the doll (the focus) is expressed with *-ka*. The predicate portion of the sentence "gave it to me" is not expressed because the speaker was interrupted by her mother, so the focus constituent *Unse appaka* 'Unse's father' happens to be placed at the end of the sentence. (Unlike in English, relative clauses always precede their antecedents in Korean.) The examples we have seen in (69), (70), and (71) have thus shown that the marker *-ka* functions as an argument-focus marker in Korean.

5.2 SENTENCE-FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS: -KA AS A SENTENCE-FOCUS MARKER

As discussed in section 2.3, the sentence-focus structure can be characterized as presuppositionless³⁰ since neither the subject nor the predicate is in the presupposition in this structure: all elements in the proposition are in the focus domain, contributing to the

³⁰ Lambrecht (1994: 233-234) points out that this does not mean no sentence-focus structure can have any presuppositions or topic expressions. Consider again his example of a sentence-focus structure, which was discussed in section 2.3:

- (i) A: What happened?
B: My CAR broke down

According to Lambrecht, the sentence (iB) has the topic expression *my* and the presupposition that B has a car. However, the topic expression and the presupposition have no direct bearing on the overall focus structure of the sentence.

assertion expressed by the sentence. The sentence-focus structure is often characterized as “all-new” (Lambrecht 1988a) since its presuppositionless character requires that both the subject referent and the predicate be new to the discourse (i.e. unidentifiable or inactive). Thus, the propositions expressed by sentence-focus structures do not show the binary nature (the division of a proposition into the portion in the presupposition and the portion in focus) that is found in argument-focus and topic-comment structures.

According to Lambrecht (1994:144), the subject is an unmarked topic argument in topic-comment sentences, and the contrast between topic-comment sentences and sentence-focus sentences crucially involves the grammatical relation subject: i.e. the crucial difference between topic-comment and sentence-focus sentences is that while the subject referents are topics in topic-comment sentences, they are focus elements in sentence-focus sentences. So by marking its subject argument, which would function as a topic in its topic-comment (predicate-focus) counterpart, as non-topic, the sentence-focus structure distinguishes itself from the topic-comment structure, and by marking its predicate as non-presupposed, it distinguishes itself from the argument-focus structure.

Lambrecht (1994, 1988a) divides sentence-focus sentences into two subtypes depending on their functions in the discourse: presentational and event-reporting.³¹ Even though the functions of presentational and event-reporting sentences are not the same, i.e. the one presenting a new referent into a discourse and the other reporting a new event, both types of sentences have a common property which applies to all sentence-focus structures, i.e. the “all-new” character, and they share the common formal properties as sentence-focus structures across languages, as illustrated in the following examples:

³¹ He also calls the sentences with sentence-focus (i.e. presentational and event-reporting) interpretations “thetic sentences” following Kuroda (1972) and Sasse (1987).

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (72) a. JOHN arrived. | a'. The PHONE is ringing! |
| b. E arrivato GIOVANNI. | b'. Squilla il TELEFONO! |
| c. Y'a JEAN qui est arrivé. | c'. Y'a le TELEPHONE qui SONNE! |
| d. JOHN ga kita. | d'. DENWA ga NATTE iru yo! |

(Lambrecht, 1994: 143-144)

In the left column of the data, we have presentational sentences of English, Italian, French and Japanese, respectively, and in the right column we have event-reporting sentences of those languages. According to Lambrecht, the sentences in the left column are presentational since they “can be used by a speaker to introduce the referent “John” into the discourse, from which point on it could be anaphorically referred to in pronominal or null form,” and the sentences on the right column are event-reporting since they “serve to announce an event of ringing.” In spite of this difference, it is noted that these two types of sentences have the same formal markings: subject accentuation in English, subject-verb inversion in Italian, *y'a*-cleft in French, and *ga*-marking in Japanese. As mentioned, the reason is that both structures keep the all-new character by introducing “a new element into the discourse without linking this element either to an already established topic or to some presupposed proposition (Lambrecht 1994:144).” The newly introduced element in a presentational sentence is an entity, while it is an event which involves a new entity in the case of event-reporting sentences. Since both types of sentence-focus structures are used to introduce new elements (whether an entity or an event) into a discourse, Lambrecht (1987b, 1994) argues that all of the sentence-focus structures should be considered “inherently presentational.”

Now, let us see how sentence-focus structures are formally realized in Korean. Among the four different formal markings introduced in (72), Korean, like Japanese, uses

morphological means to express its sentence-focus structure. The marker *-ka*, which is used for argument focus in Korean, is also used for sentence-focus structures. Let us first see presentational sentences in Korean:

(73) (RB) Context: A secretary (S) and his boss are in the boss's office. The secretary is now informing the boss of a meeting that will take place soon.

S: 곧 회의가 있습니다.

Kot **hoyuy-ka** issupnita.

Soon meeting-NOM be

‘There is **a meeting (ka)** soon.’

In Korean, the verb *issta* ‘to exist’ is used by a speaker when he introduces a new referent into a discourse, so it is a presentational verb in Korean, whose function is the same as *there is/are* phrases in English. In S’s utterance above, an unidentifiable referent is presented, and the marker *-ka* is used to introduce this referent. So it may be proposed that the sentence-focus structure is formally marked by the marker *-ka* on the subject NP. The suggestion will be proved right as we look at more sentence-focus examples in Korean below.

The data in (74) below show another presentational sentence in Korean, in which the verb is *tuleota* ‘to come in.’ Consider:

(74) (AS) Context: A cleaned B’s room and left a note for B. B has come back and he is now reading the note.

Note: 충전 다 시켰습니다. 며칠 계신단 얘길 들었는데 가방이 없길래 잠옷을 따로 챙겨서 옷장에 넣어 두었습니다. 메시지가 몇 개씩이나 들어왔네요.

Chwungcen ta sikyesssupnita. Myechil kyesintan yaykil tuleless-nuntey
recharging all did for.some.days staying that I.heard-but

kapangi eps-killay camosul ttalo chayngky-ese
bag not.exist-because nightclothes especially take-and

oscang-ey twuesssupnita. **meysici- ka** myechkayssikina tulewassneyyo.
closet-at put message-NOM some came.in

‘I finished recharging (your cell phone). I heard you are going to stay here for some days, but because there was no bag, I took your nightclothes and put them in the closet. **Some messages (ka)** came in (on your cell phone).

The function of the sentence *Meysici-ka myechkayssikina tuleoassneyyo* ‘some messages came in’ in (74) is presentational since it introduces new referents “some messages” into the discourse. (However, note that it is also possible to interpret the sentence as announcing an event of message-coming). Again in the sentence, the NP expressing the newly introduced referents is marked by *-ka*. This provides another piece of evidence supporting the proposal that the sentence-focus structure is formally marked by the marker *-ka* on the subject NP in Korean.

Now, let us look at the other type of sentence-focus constructions in Korean, i.e. event-reporting sentences. Consider the following data sets, each of which contains an event-reporting sentence:

(75) (AS) Context: A husband (H) and a wife (W) went camping with Unse (their daughter). They are by a river now.

W: 당신 안 추워?

Tangsin an chwuw-e?

you not be.cold-Q

‘Aren’t you cold?’

H: 차에서 숄 가지고 올게.

Cha-eyse syol kaciko o-lkey.

Car-from shawl take come-will

‘I will bring the shawl from the car.’

W: 당신 우리 은서랑 참 잘 어울려. 오늘 낮에 학장님이 전화하셨습니다.
당신 없어서 내가 그냥 예정대로 교환교수 간다고 말씀드렸습니다.

Tangsin wuli Unse-lang cham cal ewulye. Onul nacey **hakcangnim-i**
you our Unse-with really well match today afternoon dean-NOM

cenheahsyeseoyo. Tangsin eps-ese nayka kunyang yecengdaylo
called you absent-because I just as.planned

kyohwankyoswu ka-ntako malssumtulyesseyo.

exchange.professor go-that told

‘You are really getting along well with Unse. Today **the dean (ka)** called.
Because you were not there, I just told him that you will go (to America) as an
exchange professor as planned.’

(76) (AS) Context: D is a daughter of M. M came back home and accidentally saw D crying.

M: 신애야!

Sinay-ya!

Sinay-VOC

‘Sinay!’

D: 오빠가 때렸어요.

Oppa-ka ttaylyesseyo.

brother-NOM hit

‘**My brother (ka)** hit me.’

M: 여자애가 울고 다니고 그럼 안된다. 저녁 먹어야 되니까 씻구와라.

Yecaayka wulko taniko kulem antoynta. Cenyek mekeya

girls crying walk.around if be.not.good dinner eat

toy-nikka ssis-ko-wala.

should-since wash-and-come.back

‘It is not good if girls hang around crying. Wash your hands since we have to have dinner.’

Both of the examples in (75) and (76) have a sentence which expresses an unexpected event that involves a new (inactive or unidentifiable) referent (the dean and the brother, respectively). Since the speakers use those sentences to announce some new event, the sentences can be regarded as event-reporting. In (75), speaker W is telling her husband that the dean called him, and it is obvious from the context that she assumes this event is

new to the husband. Also in (76), what speaker D is telling her mother as the reason for her crying (i.e. her brother's hitting her) is a new event to her mother. However, it should be noted that the sentence-focus sentence *Onul nacey hakcangnim-i cenheahsyeseoyo* 'Today the dean called.' in (75) can also be interpreted as presentational, since the referent "the dean" is anaphorically referred to in null form in the following sentence. On the other hand, the main purpose of the speaker using the sentence-focus sentence in (76D) is announcing an event rather than introducing a new referent into the discourse. In both event-reporting sentences, neither the subject referents nor the predicates are in the presupposition: both of them are new to the discourse. The event-reporting sentences in (75) and (76) show that they preserve the "all-new" character of the sentence-focus structure, so they can be subsumed under the category of sentence-focus structure together with presentational sentences.

According to Lambrecht (1995:166), it is possible "to establish an inherent connection between sentence-focus subject and non-agentive semantic role" in English. However, as the sentence-focus example (76D) shows, there seems to be no such inherent connection in Korean. Consider the following examples:

(77) (CS: 5) a. 경찰이 아버지를 체포해갔어요.

Kyengchal-i apeci-lul cheyphohaykasseyo.

Police-NOM father-ACC arrested

'**The police (ka)** arrested my father.'

b. 우리 선생님이 화가 나서 책상을 부셨어요.

Wuli sensayngnim-i hwakanase chaysang-ul pwusyesseyo.

Our teacher-NOM in.anger desk-ACC broke

'**Our teacher (ka)** broke a desk in anger.'

In both (77a) and (77b), which are examples of event-reporting sentences, the agentive arguments “the police” and “our teacher” are expressed as a subject. So these examples, like the one in (76D), also show that agentive subjects can naturally occur in sentence-focus constructions in Korean.³²

If we examine how the event-reporting sentences are formally expressed in (75) and (76), we can notice that they have the same formal markings as the presentational sentences in (73) and (74): the subjects of the sentences are all marked by *-ka*. Since the event-reporting sentences and the presentational sentences share the same formal features, we can conclude that sentence-focus structure in Korean is expressed by a *ka*-marked subject NP.

5.3 ACCESSIBLE OR ACTIVE REFERENTS WITH THE MARKER *-KA*: UNEXPECTED AND SURPRISING EVENTS

In section 5.2, the category “sentence-focus structure” was characterized as expressing an “all-new” proposition, which presents a new discourse referent or a new event involving a new referent in a discourse. So, it is naturally expected that a referent which appears in a sentence-focus structure is discourse-new, and the sentence-focus sentences in section 5.2 indeed show this “all-new” character. However, in this section, we will see some data which may challenge the “all-new” character of the sentence-focus

³² According to Lambrecht (p.c.), the English counterpart of the Korean examples in (77) would have more than one focus accent, as indicated in the following.

- (i) a. The POLICE arrested my FATHER.
- b. Our TEACHER broke a DESK in ANGER.

Two types of sentence accents are distinguished in English (cf. Jackendoff (1972) and Büring (2003)): focus accent, which indicates focus, and topic accent, which indicates an unratified topic (cf. section 4.6.1). While the accent pattern of the focus accent is fall, that of the topic accent is fall-rise.

structure. That is, we will see some active or accessible referents marked by *-ka* appearing in sentence-focus constructions. Let us first look at the following conversation:

(78) (AS) Context: a man (M) and his wife (W) are looking at their son (S) and their daughter (D) coming home from school. It is rainy and the children are all wet. The daughter's name is Unse.

M: 어퍼!

Eme!

Oh.my.goodness

‘Oh, my goodness!’

F: 이 녀석들 다 젖었네.

I nyesektul ta cecessney.

these guys all be.wet

‘They are all wet.’

M: 비 맞았어?

Pi macass-e?

rain took-Q

‘Were you in the rain?’

S: 은서가 쫓아 왔어요.

Unse-ka ccochawasseyo.

Unse-NOM chased

‘**Unse (ka)** was chasing me.’

D: 아냐, 이거 다 오빠 때문이야. 오빠 연애 편지만 아니었어도...

Anyā, ike ta oppa ttaymwuniya. Oppa yenaypyenci-man aniesseto...

no this all brother be.because.of brother's love.letter-only not-if

‘No, it’s all because of you. If it were not for your love letter..., (I would not come running after you.)’

Since the daughter, Unse, is present in the speech situation in (78), it is clear that the subject referent of S’s utterance is situationally accessible, and due to this accessibility, the referent may be expected to be expressed as a topic. However, the sentence has exactly the same formal markings as the sentence-focus sentences in the previous section: the subject is marked by *-ka*. (Note that the sentence cannot be interpreted as having argument-focus structure since the denotatum of the VP is not presupposed.) Then, why is the accessible referent not expressed as a topic? To answer this question, we need to see what type of information the speaker wants to express by the sentence. If we look at the context of S’s utterance in (78) more carefully, we will find the answer: what speaker S wants to tell their parents by the sentence is the surprising and unexpected new event that his sister, Unse, has been chasing him, rather than some information about her. (This is exactly the reason why Unse is not a topic.) Thus, the speaker needs to express a new event by the sentence, and he needs to express the subject referent as a non-topic element (i.e. merely as a participant in the event rather than as a topic). And both of the speaker’s needs are satisfied by marking the sentence as a sentence-focus structure.

We can see some more examples that have active or accessible referents marked by *-ka*. Consider:

(79) (AS) Context: A is B's fiancée. A is sick and now lying on a bed in a hospital room, where A's mother (M) is taking care of her. B is now entering the room.

B: 팬찮습니까? 팬찮은 거죠?

Kwaynchanh-supnikka? Kwaynchanhunke-cyo?³³

be.OK-Q be.OK-right

'Is she OK? She is OK, right?'

M: 대체 어딜 갔다 온 건가? 자네 안 온다고 애가 밥도 제대로 못 넘기더니 이 모양 아닌가.

Taychey etil kass-ta onke-nka? Caney an ontako
on.earth where went-and come.back-Q you not come-because

yay- ka pap-to ceytaylo mos mek-teni i moyang ani-nka?
this.kid- NOM meal-even well can't eat-and such shape not-Q

'Where did you go? Because you did not come, **this kid (ka)** couldn't even eat, and she is in such a bad shape.

B: 휴, 죄송합니다.

Hyu, coysonghapnita.

Hyoo I.am.sorry

'Hyoo, I am sorry.'

In M's second sentence, the subject referent in the main clause is accessible since the referent, her daughter, is lying on a bed right before B and M, and we notice that the

³³ The verbal ending *-cyo/-ci* functions as a tag question in Korean.

sentence is formally marked as having sentence-focus structure like the sentence we discussed in (78). Again, the reason for this formal marking is that what the speaker M wants to express by the sentence is the unexpected and surprising event that her daughter couldn't eat well, rather than providing some information about her daughter.

Before providing some more detailed explanation on those accessible or active referents appearing in sentence-focus structures, let us see one more case, in which the pronoun *na* 'I,' whose active status is beyond question, is marked by the focus marker *-ka*.

(80) (AS) Context: A unexpectedly visited B's house early in the morning. B was A's brother a long time ago, but not now. (The blood test revealed that they are not siblings.)

A: 오빠

Oppa.

brother

'Brother!'

B: 은서야.

Unse-ya.

Unse-VOC

'Unse!'

A: 일어 났어요? 내가 너무 일찍 왔나?

Ilenasseyo? **Nay- ka** nemwu ilccik wass-na?

Wake.up-Q I-NOM too early came-Q

'Are you awake? Did **I (ka)** come too early?'

In the second utterance of A, it is shown that even the active referent of the pronoun subject *nay* 'I' is marked with *-ka*; the sentence has sentence-focus structure. Since active referents are the preferred candidates to be topics, the pronoun could be expressed as a topic by the speaker. However, A did not choose to express it as a topic. Rather, by this sentence A is expressing an event which is assumed to be unexpected to B, i.e. the event that A visited B early in the morning, and the sentence has the formal markings of the sentence-focus structure.

All of the examples of active or accessible referents that we have seen above have one thing in common: all of the sentences express unexpected or surprising events in which the active or accessible referents take part as necessary participants. In other words, the speakers' intention is not to give comments about those referents but to use the whole proposition as one (i.e. non-binary) unit to express an unexpected event. So in Korean, sentence-focus structures seem to tolerate accessible or active referents as long as the speakers express unexpected events with them.

Lambrecht (1987b, 1988a, 1995) shows that accessible referents appear in sentence-focus structures also in English and French. Let us consider the following English and French examples from Lambrecht (1987b):

(81) Context: A is working in front of a computer terminal. Other colleagues are working at other terminals in the same room.

A: Oh shit! The SCREEN's going dead!

(82) Context: A is talking to his mom in the presence of the person referred to as Jean.

A: Y'a Jean qui m'a donné un coup de pied!

there is Jean who has given me a kick

'Jean kicked me!

It is clear from the contexts that the referents “the screen” and “Jean” are accessible since both of them are saliently present in the speech settings. So it would in principle be possible for both referents to be expressed as topics in the same contexts. However, in both sentences they are not expressed as topics, and the sentences are formally marked as sentence-focus structures: in the English example in (81), only the subject NP is accented while the rest of the sentence remains unaccented, and in the French example in (82), the *y'a*-cleft (*avoir*-cleft) construction is used. Lambrecht emphasizes that the reason that the speakers use the sentence-focus constructions here is that they want to express what they think are unexpected or surprising events. This is exactly parallel to the Korean examples discussed above, and it is quite striking that languages from different typological groups show exactly the same phenomenon: English, French, and Korean use the same type of focus structure, i.e. sentence-focus structure to express unexpected events.³⁴

However, there is a difference between the Korean examples and the English and French examples. As indicated by Lambrecht (1988a, 2000), English and French usually do not allow subject pronouns to appear in such sentence-focus constructions (i.e. the *avoir*-cleft construction in French, and constructions in which only the subject NP is

³⁴ According to Lambrecht (p.c.), Japanese also uses sentence-focus structure (*ga*-marked subjects) to express a surprising/unexpected event.

accented in English). As we saw in (80) however, the Korean sentence-focus structure allows even pronouns. So what matters in Korean seems to be just the surprising or unexpected nature of the proposition conveyed to the addressee, irrespective of the pragmatic properties of the referent participating in the event. The example in (80) thus shows that the cognitive constraint on the subject referent in Korean event-reporting sentences is less stringent than in English and French event-reporting sentences; while the constraint in English and French is such that they do not allow pronouns in their sentence-focus structures, the constraint in Korean is relaxed to the point that even pronouns can appear in its sentence-focus structures.

5.4 -KA IN SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

In section 5.1 and 5.2, the marker *-ka* was defined as a focus marker that indicates both argument focus and sentence focus in Korean. However it has often been noticed that this marker appears frequently in presupposed subordinate clauses. Since every element is in the presupposition in the pragmatically structured proposition of a presupposed clause, it would pose a problem to claim that the marker *-ka* indicates focus in such cases. In this section, I will address the issue of *-ka* in subordinate clauses and reveal the function of *-ka* in such clauses. In section 5.4.1, I will show that asserted (i.e. non-presupposed) subordinate clauses can have the same three focus structures (i.e. topic-comment, argument-focus, and sentence-focus structures) as main clauses and that *-ka* marks both argument focus and sentence focus in asserted subordinate clauses. In section 5.4.2, with various examples of presupposed subordinate clauses whose subjects are *ka*-marked, I will first show that, like asserted clauses, presupposed subordinate clauses can have three different focus structures depending on their interpretation in the discourse; if presupposed clauses have argument-focus or sentence-focus construals, their subjects are

marked with *-ka*. Then, it will be pointed out that some presupposed clauses that have topic-comment construals have *ka*-marked subjects, and I will propose that *-ka* loses its function of focus marking in those clauses, being used only to indicate subjecthood.

5.4.1 *-ka* in Asserted Subordinate Clauses

Let us first look at *ka*-marked subjects in non-presupposed subordinate clauses and see if *-ka* plays the same focus-marking role as in main clauses. Consider the following examples:

- (83) (CS:5) Context: A and B are co-workers in the same office. Minswu is B's friend, and A met Minswu several times before. A happened to see Minswu in the park yesterday.

A: 어제 공원에서 민수 봤는데. 그 친구 아직도 삼성에서 일하니?

Ecey kongwen-eyse Minswu pwatnundey.

yesterday park-in Minswu saw

Ku chinkwu acikto Samsung-eyse ilha-ni?

That guy still Samsung-at work-Q

'I saw Minswu in the park yesterday. Does he still work at Samsung?'

B: 아니오, 민수 미국으로 곧 유학 간다고 들었어요.

Anio, Minswu mikwuk-ulo kot yuhak kan-tako tulesseyo.

No Minswu America-to soon study.abroad leave-that heard

'No, I heard **that he is going to leave for America soon to study.**'

(84) (RB) Context: A's son, who was a policeman, was killed by poisoning. A is with three policemen now, and he is complaining to them that he can't trust the police investigating the case.

A: 난 아무도 못 믿는다. 하느님이 수사한대도 못 믿어...

Nan amwuto mot mitnunta. **Hanunim-i swusahan-tayto** mot mite...

I anybody can't trust God-NOM investigate-even.if can't trust

'I can't trust anybody. **Even if God (ka) were to investigate**, I can't trust...'

(85) (RB) Context: A, who is a police chief, came to know that one of his men ran away after being bribed. A is angry and is now rebuking the boss of the policeman who ran away.

A: 이거 징계감이야. 만에하나 이런 불미스런 일이 외부에 유출되기라도 한다면 난 물론이고 자네까지 발령감이라고.

Ike cingkyey kam-iyā. **Maneyhana ilen pwulmisulen il-i**

this punishment matter-be ever this shameful thing-NOM

oypwu-ey yuchwultoykilatohanta-myen nan mwulloniko

outside-to leak.out-if I not.only

caney-kkaci pallyeng kam-ilako

you-but.also order.of.transfer matter-be

‘This is a matter of punishment. **If this shameful news (ka) ever leaks out**, not only I but also you will be transferred.

The highlighted subordinate clauses in (83), (84), and (85) are non-presupposed, and these examples show that non-presupposed subordinate clauses, like main clauses, can have three focus structures; the subordinate clauses in (83), (84), and (85) have topic-comment, argument-focus, and sentence-focus structures, respectively. The subordinate clauses in (84) and (85) also show that the marker *-ka* functions as a focus marker indicating both argument-focus and sentence-focus structures not only in main clauses but also in non-presupposed subordinate clauses.

5.4.2 *-ka* in Presupposed Subordinate Clauses

5.4.2.1 Three Focus Structures in Presupposed Clauses

In their work on English information questions (i.e. *wh*-questions), Lambrecht & Michaelis (1998:508-509) show that adverbial clauses in English whose propositions are presupposed can have the same prosodic structures as main clauses, as in the following examples:

- (86) a. [since SOCIETY’s to blame,] he should be PARDONED.
- b. [When I slipped on the ICE,] I decided to SUE.
- c. [If your SHOE’s untied,] you ought to STOP.

(Lambrecht & Michaelis 1998:508)

In (86), the presupposed propositions in the subordinate clauses have argument-focus structure in (86a), topic-comment structure in (86b), and sentence-focus structure in (87c): sentence accents on the subjects and no accent on the VPs in (86a) and (86c), and a sentence accent on the VP in (86b). According to Lambrecht & Michaelis, the reason that presupposed clauses can have the same focus articulations as asserted propositions is that “the pragmatic relations (topic and focus) between the predicates and the arguments can be mentally construed independently of the information status of the proposition as presupposed or asserted.” In other words, presupposed propositions, like asserted propositions, can also be pragmatically construed as comments about their topics (cf. (86b)), or as providing the missing arguments in open propositions (cf. (86a)), or as reporting events (cf. (86c)). The only difference is that, unlike in asserted propositions, the comment in a topic-comment structure, the identity relation between an argument and an open proposition in an argument-focus structure, and the reported event in a sentence-focus structure are not new to the addressees in presupposed propositions.

Let us turn to Korean presupposed subordinate clauses and see whether the presupposed propositions of subordinate clauses in Korean can have their own focus articulations like those in English. The following data, which provide three types of presupposed subordinate clauses in Korean, i.e. restrictive relative clauses, time-adverbial clauses, and *-nikka/-ni* (since) clauses, will show that they also do have the same three different focus structures as asserted propositions. Consider:

(87) (AS) Context: A is drunk in his hotel room. A told B about his sad family history.

A: 내가 왜 이런 애길 너한테 주절 주절 하고 있는 거냐? 응? 니가 뭔데? 응? 너 뭐니? 알았다. 왜 그런지 알았어. 나 너한테 관심 많거든. 내 비밀 다 말했으니까 나 약점 잡힌 거 아냐?

Nayka way ilen yaykil ne-hantey cwucelcwucel hako issnunke-nya? Ung?

I why such story you-to muttering telling be-Q ung

Nika mwentey? Ung? Ne mweni? Alassta. Way kulen-ci alasse.

you what ung you what I.see why do.that-that know

Na ne-hantey kwansim manhketun.Ø **Nay pimil yaykihayssu-nikka**³⁵

I you-toward interest be.much my secret told-since

na yakcem caphinke any-a?

I weakness be.caught not-Q

‘Why am I telling you such a story? Ung? Who are you? Ung? Who are you? I see! I see why. I am much interested in you. **Since I told you my secret**, don’t you catch my weakness?’

³⁵ In this section, all of the Korean presupposed subordinate clauses and their English translations are highlighted.

B: 죄송합니다.

Coysonghapnita.

I.am.sorry

‘I am sorry.’

The highlighted subordinate clause in A’s utterance is followed by the suffix *–nikka* (*nikka/ni*-clauses in Korean correspond to English *since*-clauses), and its proposition is presupposed. Since the subject of this clause is unexpressed, the clause is formally marked as a topic-comment structure, and moreover the predicate is construed as a comment on the topic referent, the speaker. Thus, the data show that the presupposed propositions of subordinate clauses in Korean, as in English, can also have topic-comment structure.

Next, let us see if presupposed propositions can have argument-focus structure in Korean. Consider the following:

(88) (RB) Context: A and B are friends. Both of them are policemen, and they work at the same police station. B is telling A that their boss has a day off, which A did not know. A wants to talk with the boss, but it’s hard since A has the boss’s cell phone now.

A: 뭐? 월차?

Mwe? Welcha?

what a.day.off

‘What? Does he have a day off?’

B: 응, 몰랐어?

Ung, molass-e?

yes did.not.know-Q

‘Yes. Didn’t you know that?’

A: 아참, (책상위에 휴대폰 보면서) 반장님 걸 내가 갖고 있으니
연락도 안되고.

Acham. (looking at the chief’s cell phone on his desk) **Pancangnin kel**
goodness boss thing

nay-ka kacko issu-ni yenlakto antoyko.

I-NOM keep be-since keep.in.touch can’t

‘Goodness. **Since I (ka) am keeping his cell phone**, I can’t get in touch with
him.’

In A’s second utterance, the highlighted subordinate clause is followed by the suffix *-ni*, and what is presupposed in this clause is that the speaker (A) is keeping his chief’s cell phone. The presupposed status of the proposition is also proven by his keeping the cell phone on his desk. Note that, by his utterance, A is actually emphasizing that it is himself (not the chief) who keeps the cell phone. Thus the proposition has got an argument-focus construal, and the presupposed clause has argument-focus structure: the subject is *ka*-marked.

Let us look at another example of a presupposed clause with argument-focus structure.

(89) (RB) Context: A is a policeman, and B is a reporter. B wants to get some information from A about a murder case that happened recently. However, A does not tell anything. A little frustrated, B asks A if A took a bribe.

A: 받긴 뭘 받아요? 알지도 못하면서. 제발 기자님들, 추측보도 할
생각좀 하지 마요.

Patkin mwel pat-ayo? Alcito mothamyense. Ceypal
take what take-Q know cannot please

kicanimtul, cwucukpoto hal sayngkak com hacimayo.

reporters report.by.guessing do intend please don't

‘What did I take? You don’t know anything. You reporters, don’t try to make a
report that is not certain please.’

B: 그러니까 사실대로 말해 주세요. 형사님들이 이렇게 쉬쉬하시니까
없던 상상력까지 발휘 되잖아요.

Kulenikka sasiltaylo malhay cwuseyo. **Hyengsanimtul-i** ilekhe
so truth tell please policemen-NOM like.this

swiswihasi-nikka epsten sangsanglyekkkaci palhwi toycanayo.

not.tell-since not.have imagination exert became

‘So please tell me the truth. **Since you policemen (ka) do not tell me the truth**, I
am using my imagination power.’

In B's second sentence in (89), we have a *nikka*-clause, whose proposition is presupposed. Since B is emphasizing that it is the policemen who do not tell her the truth, the clause has an argument-focus construal. Hence, the clause has a *ka*-marked subject.

Finally, let us see the following two data sets, in each of which a presupposed proposition has sentence-focus structure:

- (90) (AS) Context: A is Yumi's mother and B is Yunsebang's cousin. A's daughter (Yumi) and B's cousin (Yunsebang) are engaged. Recently A heard that Yunsebang was going to break up with her daughter, so A visited the place where B and Yunsebang live. Since A could not find Yunsebang, she is talking to B now.

A: 아가씨가 윤서방 친척 동생 된다는 아가씨가?

Akassika Yunsebang chinchektongsayng toynta-nun akassi-i-nka?

Young.lady Mr.Yun cousin become-REL young.lady-be-Q

'Are you the young lady who is Mr. Yun's cousin?'

B: 네.

Ney

yes

'Yes.'

A: 유미가 얘기 많이 하더라구요. 근데 여기 사는 건가요?

Yumika yayki manhi hatelakwuyo. Kuntey yeki sanunke-nkayo?

Yumi talk much did by.the.way here live-Q

'Yumi told me a lot about you. By the way, do you live here?'

B: 네.

Ney

yes

‘Yes.’

A: 아가씨, 대체 윤서방이 우리 애랑 헤어진다는 이유가 뭔가요?

Akassi, taychey **Yunsebang-i** wuli ay-lang heyecinta-nun
young.lady on.earth Mr.Yoon-NOM my kid-with break.up-REL

iyuka mwenkayo?

reason what

‘Young lady, what on earth is the reason that **Mr. Yun (ka) is going to break up with my child?**’

(91) (RB) Context: A and B are policemen. B is talking to A about a car accident that happened to B’s friend (he was a policeman, too) about twenty years ago. After hearing that B’s friend’s son was also in the car when the accident happened, A was a bit surprised.

A: 아들까지요?

Atul-kkaci-yo?

Son-even-Q

‘Even his son (died)?’

B: 사고가 난 다음에야 알았어. 강혁이가 같이 있었던 건.

Sako-ka nan taumey-ya alasse.

Accident-NOM happen after-only knew

Kanghyekika kathi issessten ken

Kanghyek together be thing

‘We knew that **only after the accident (ka) happened**. The fact that Kanghyek (B’s friend’s son) was with his father.’

The highlighted clause in A’s third utterance in (90) shows an example of a restrictive relative clause, whose propositions are generally considered presupposed. Since A’s daughter and B’s cousin are engaged, it would be an unexpected and surprising event to both A and B that the couple are going to break up. So the presupposed proposition expresses an unexpected event, and due to the event nature of the proposition and its original unexpectedness, the speaker chooses the formal markings of the sentence-focus structure for this proposition: *ka*-marking on the subject NP. Also in (91), which contains a time-adverbial clause (time-adverbial clauses in Korean are expressed by suffixes such as *-ttay* ‘when,’ *-taumey* ‘after,’ and *-ceney* ‘before,’ and the propositional contents of these clauses are considered presupposed), the proposition of this time-adverbial clause expresses a surprising event, and the clause formally has a sentence-focus structure. Thus, the data in (90) and (91) both show that a presupposed proposition can also have a sentence-focus structure in Korean if it expresses an (unexpected/surprising) event.

5.4.2.2 *-ka* as a Mere Subject Indicator in Presupposed Clauses with Topic-Comment Construals

The data in (87) – (91) have shown that presupposed propositions can have the same three different types of focus structure as asserted propositions in Korean. If we examine more examples, however, we will notice that there are some *ka*-marked NPs in

presupposed subordinate clauses which cannot be explained by the three types of focus structure. That is, some of the presupposed clauses with *ka*-marked subjects cannot be interpreted as having argument-focus or sentence-focus construals. Consider the following presupposed clauses:

(92) (AS) Context: After the birthday party of their daughter Sinay, the parents start to talk about Unse, who they expected to come, but who did not show up.

A: 은서 오지 않을 줄 알았어요. 그래도 선물 사고 은서 몫으로 케익 만들면서 설레었는데. 우리 은서가 좋아하는 치즈케익인데.

Unse oci anhul cwul alasseyo. Kulayto senmwul sa-ko Unse moksulo
Unse com not that knew even.so present buy-and Unse for

kheyik mantulmyense seley-essnunde. **Wuli Unse-ka coaha-nun**
cake making be.happy our Unse-NOM like-REL

chicukheyik-inde.

cheesecake-be

‘I knew that she would not come. Even so, I was happy while I was buying a present and making a cake for her. It was **a cheese cake Unse (ka) likes.**’

(93) (AS) Context: A is telling B that he wants to date B’s cousin Unse. But B does not like it. Sinay is B’s sister.

A: 윤준서!

Yuncwunse!

Yuncwunse

‘Yuncwunse!’

B: 안돼 은서가 얼마나 이쁜 앤데. 넌 안돼.

Antway. Unseka elmana ippun ayntey. Nen antoay.

no Unse how prettygirl you no

‘No. Unse is a very pretty girl. You can’t!’

A: 돼. 신애가 나 좋아한다 그럴 땐 괜찮았잖아.

Tway. **Sinay-ka na coahanta kulel ttayn** koaynchanasscianha.

can Sinay-NOM me like said when be.OK

‘I can. **When Sinay (ka) said she liked me**, it was OK (to you).’

B: 니가 안 좋아했으니까.

Ni-ka an cohahayssu-nikka.

you-NOM not liked-since

‘**Since you (ka) didn’t like her.**’

The presupposed propositions of the three highlighted subordinate clauses in (92) and (93) cannot be taken to have argument-focus or sentence-focus construal though their subjects are marked by *-ka*. Rather, they are regarded as having topic-comment contrual since the predicates are construed as comments on the subject referents. Then, why are the topic subjects in these presupposed propositions which have topic-comment construals marked by *-ka*? The answer to this question is provided by the fact that the marker *-ka* functions as a subject indicator as well as a focus marker in Korean. As

pointed out in chapter 3, it is generally accepted in the Korean literature that *-ka* functions as a subject indicator.

Since the marker *-ka* has the dual functions of indicating both subject and focus, the marker would be interpreted only as a subject indicator in some presupposed propositions in which *-ka* would not be interpreted as a focus indicator. That is, in presupposed propositions whose focus construals are topic-comment, the marker *-ka* functions only as a subject indicator losing its function of indicating focus, and in many cases, it is indeed not obligatorily needed, i.e. *-ka* is optionally attached to subject NPs when merely indicating their subjecthood.³⁶ As we will see, the optionality of the marker *-ka* in a presupposed clause applies not only in presupposed subordinate clauses but also in *wh*-questions, which have presupposed open propositions. Let us first consider the following data, in which the optionality of *-ka* in a presupposed subordinate clause is well illustrated:

- (94) (AS) Context: A and B are eating dinner together. B was surprised to find out that A made much food that B likes. B is A's brother.

A: 이거 오빠가 좋아하는 거지? 이것도 맛있다.

Ike	oppa-ka	cohaha-nun	ke-ci?	Ikes-to	masissta.
this	brother-NOM	like-REL	thing-right	this-also	be.delicious

‘This is **the thing you (ka) like**, right? This is also delicious.’

³⁶ Non-presupposed subordinate clauses, however, do not show such optionality. As in main clauses, if the subject is *ka*-marked in a non-presupposed subordinate clause, the *ka*-marked subject forces the sentence to have a sentence-focus interpretation (event-reporting or presentational). Thus the non-presupposed complement clause in (83) in section 5.4.1, if its subject were expressed as a *ka*-marked NP, could not be construed as a comment on the subject referent. Rather, the clause would be interpreted as reporting an unexpected event.

B: 왜 일이야? 이걸 언제 준비했어? 오늘 일 일찍 끝났어?

Wayniliya? Ikel encey cwunpihayss-e? Onul il ilccik kkuthnass-e?

what.happen this when prepared-Q today work early finished-Q

‘What happened? When did you make them? Did you finish your work early today?’

A: 잔뜩 오빠 좋아하는 음식만 만들었지? 착하지?

Canttuk **oppa cohaha-nun umsik**-man mantulessci? Chakha-ci?

much brother like-REL food-only made-right be.nice-right

‘I made **only the food you like** a lot, right? Am I not nice?’

The two highlighted relative clauses in (94) have exactly the same information structure: their presupposed propositions have the same semantic content and they equally express comments about the same topic (B). The only difference is that the modified noun is “thing” in the first relative clause and it is “food” in the second. Though the two relative clauses have the same information structure, the subject is expressed with *-ka* in one sentence, and it is expressed as a bare NP in the other. The *ka*-marked NP *oppa-ka* in A’s first utterance could be replaced by a bare NP *oppa* without causing any differences in the interpretation or pragmatic oddities, and likewise, the bare NP *oppa* in A’s second utterance can be replaced by *oppa-ka*; whether their subjects are *ka*-marked or bare NPs, the presupposed propositions are construed as comments on the topic (B). Thus, the marker *-ka* in the above data is optional, and it cannot be regarded as a focus indicator; it should be regarded as a mere subject indicator.

The optionality of the marker *-ka* in presupposed clauses also applies in *wh*-questions where the *wh*-expression is a non-subject argument. Consider the following *wh*-question that could occur at dinner time in a family:

(95) (CS: 5) Context: a mother (M), who is preparing dinner in the kitchen, had her son ask her husband what he wants to eat for dinner. Her husband is in the study room. After asking his father what he wants to eat, the son is coming back to the kitchen now.

M: 아버지(가) 뭐 드시고 싶대?

Apeci (-ka) mwe tusiko sip-tay?

father what eat want-Q

‘What does **your father (ka)** want to eat?’

In (95M), the open proposition “your father wants to eat X” is presupposed, and the sentence is acceptable either with or without the marker *-ka*. Whether *-ka* is attached to the subject NP or not, the open proposition is interpreted as having topic-comment articulation with the subject NP construed as a topic and the VP as a comment about this topic; the proposition may be interpreted as “Speaking of your father, what does he want to eat?” Thus the above example, together with those in (94), tells us that the marker *-ka* is optionally attached to the subject NPs of both types of presupposed clause (a presupposed subordinate clause and the presupposed open proposition of a *wh*-question) that have topic-comment construals.³⁷

³⁷ According to Lambrecht and Michaelis (1998), the open proposition of a *wh*-question may have sentence-focus construal if the *wh*-expression is an adjunct. This is also true of Korean *wh*-questions, as shown in the following example:

- (i) (CS: 5) 아버지가 왜 다치셨어?
 Apeci-ka way tachisyess-e?
 father-NOM why be.hurt-Q
 ‘Why is my father (ka) hurt?’

Finally, the optionality of the marker *-ka* in the presupposed subordinate clause discussed above applies to the examples of the *ka*-marked NPs in (92) and (93). The three examples have topic-comment interpretations, and we may expect that the marker *-ka*, as a mere subject indicator, is not necessarily needed in those clauses as in (94). In one of the presupposed clauses, however, the subject necessarily needs the marker *-ka*. The clause is *Ni-ka an cohahayssunikka* ‘since you didn’t like her’ in (93), and it needs *-ka* because without it the pronoun *ni* ‘you’ can be interpreted as either a subject or an object. That is, if the clause, which has only one expressed argument (the other argument “Sinay” is not expressed), were expressed without the marker *-ka* on the subject, we could interpret the clause as either “since you did not like her,” or “since she did not like you.” So the marker *-ka* plays the role of disambiguating the interpretation of the clause by indicating the subject of the clause which, otherwise, would have two different interpretations. In the following data, we can see another example of the marker *-ka* playing the role of disambiguating the interpretation of a presupposed clause:

- (96) (AS) Context: B is an employee in a hotel, and A is a director of the hotel and a son of the hotel’s owner. A loves B, and A transferred Kimsilcang, who was the boss of B, to another department because A thought Kimsilcang was picking on B. B does not like this, and wants A to apologize to Kimsilcang.

The open proposition of the *wh*-question in (i) permits sentence-focus construal since it denotes a surprising event (the speaker’s father being hurt). Due to this event character of the proposition, the marker *-ka* is necessary in this case. However, as pointed out by Lambrecht & Michaelis, a *wh*-question cannot have such sentence-focus construal if the *wh*-expression is a necessary argument of the predicate (for an English example, see Lambrecht & Michaelis (1998: 540-541)).

A: 김실장님 알지?

Kimsilcangnim al-ci?

Kimsilcang know-right

‘You know Kimsilcang, right?’

B: 김실장님이요?

Kimsilcangnimiyo?

Kimsilcang

‘Kimsilcang?’

A: 객실담당으로 복귀하실 거야. 이번엔 그냥 사인만 한 거 아냐. 가서
구십도 각도로 사과하고 빌었다. 이게 니가 원하는 남자지?

Kaysiltamtang-ulo pokkwi hasilkeya. Ipeneyn kunyang sain-man
room.service-to returning do-will this.time just signing-only

hankey aniya. Ka-se kwusiptokaktolo sakwahako pilessta.
do not go-and very.politely apologize-and begged

Ikey **ni-ka** wenha-nun namca-ci?

this you-NOM want-REL man-right

‘She will return to the room service department. This time, I did not only sign my
name but went to her and apologized and begged very politely. This is the man
you (ka) want, isn’t it?’

Again, the relative clause in A’s second utterance *nika wuenhanun* has only one argument expressed, and as in the presupposed clause discussed above, if the clause does not have

the marker *-ka* on the subject, the whole NP *ni wuenhanun namca* can be interpreted as either “the man who you want” or “the man who wants you.” Thus, the subject of the clause necessarily needs the marker *-ka*.

To summarize, the marker *-ka* in presupposed subordinate clauses in Korean has the following two functions: indicator of argument-focus and sentence-focus construals of presupposed propositions (see e.g. (88) and (90)) and mere subject indicator (see e.g. (94) and (96)). When *-ka* is used only to indicate subjecthood in a presupposed proposition, it is divided again into two subcases: either it is an optional element in a clause merely indicating the subject of the clause (cf. (94)) or it is a necessary element in a clause carrying the function of disambiguating the interpretation of the clause (cf. (96)).

Chapter 6 Summary and Conclusion

This dissertation has investigated topic and focus constructions in spoken Korean within an information structure framework (Lambrecht 1994). Information structure is defined as the part of grammar that deals with how a speaker's assumptions about the mental state of an addressee affect the linguistic forms that the speaker actually produces. Related concepts such as presupposition, assertion, topic, and focus were discussed, and it was emphasized that focus and topic are relational notions that should be determined by their roles in the pragmatically structured proposition of a sentence.

Following Lambrecht (1994), I assume that languages have three different focus structures (i.e. topic-comment, argument-focus, and sentence-focus structures), which are determined by which portion of the pragmatically structured proposition of a sentence is in focus. In chapter 2, I examined these focus structures in English and French, and I showed that these languages generally use different formal markings for their different focus structures. The sole exception was the use of the same formal marking for argument-focus and sentence-focus structures in English.

In chapter 3, I reviewed five previous approaches to the study of the markers *-nun* and *-ka*, which I referred to as “the division of *nun*-marked topics into contrastive and non-contrastive topics,” “*-nun* as a discourse-topic-establishing marker,” “focus-neutral *-ka*,” “*-ka* as a continuing-topic marker,” and “scrambling as an indicator of argument focus,” respectively. Some problems for those approaches were pointed out. First, “the division of *nun*-marked topics into contrastive and non-contrastive topics” approach claims that *nun*-marked topics are divided into two distinct categories, i.e. contrastive and non-contrastive topics. Yet by showing that *nun*-marked referents have various degrees of contrastiveness, I have claimed that the contrastiveness related to *nun*-marked topics in

Korean is a gradient rather than categorical notion. Second, the “*-nun* as a discourse-topic-establishing marker” approach claims that *-nun*, if it marks non-contrastive topics, establishes a discourse topic (the most prominent figure in the discourse). However, as mentioned above, there is no clear division between contrastive and non-contrastive topics in Korean. Moreover, it was shown that whether or not a topic is a discourse topic is irrelevant to its relative degree of contrastiveness in the context. Thus I claimed that *-nun* cannot be viewed as a discourse-topic-establishing marker. Rather, it should be considered an unratiſed-topic marker. Third, the “focus-neutral *-ka*” approach claims that *-ka* is focus-neutral since it involves both “discourse-new” and “discourse-old information” (i.e. inactive and active referents). Countering this claim, I pointed out that active referents can appear with the marker *-ka* in sentence-focus structures (unexpected and surprising events), and I argued that the marker *-ka*, even if it may involve active referents, should still be considered a focus marker. Fourth, the “*-ka* as a continuing-topic marker” approach claims that some active *ka*-marked referents are continuing topics. However, I noted that sentences with active *ka*-marked NPs are interpreted as reporting unexpected events, arguing that the sentences in which the *ka*-marked referent cannot be interpreted as a topic have sentence-focus structure. Finally, I address the “scrambling as an indicator of argument focus” approach, which claims that, among the two readings encoded by *-ka* (i.e. argument-focus and sentence-focus readings), an argument-focus reading is achieved by scrambling. Using counterexamples, I have argued that the difference between sentence-focus and argument-focus readings cannot be attributed to scrambling.

Various types of Korean topic constructions and their discourse contexts were provided in chapter 4, and I proposed that these constructions should be divided into two categories, namely involving ratiſed and unratiſed topics. Ratiſed topics are those

whose topic status is expected and taken for granted at the time of utterance, while unratified topics are those whose topic status is neither expected nor taken for granted. I proposed that referents of zero pronouns, bare NPs, and right-dislocated NPs are ratified topics and that referents of *nun*-marked NPs and *maliya*-constructions are unratified topics in Korean. The examples of *nun*-marked NPs and *maliya*-constructions showed that their topic referents are unratified, mainly because they are non-active (though they are accessible or more or less permanently stored in the minds of the speaker/hearer). Also, it has been shown that the active topic referents of *nun*-marked NPs are unratified due to the presence of more salient topics already established in the discourse or to potential alternatives.

Chapter 5 discussed Korean focus constructions, and it was shown that the marker *-ka* indicates argument-focus and sentence-focus structures (both presentational and event-reporting constructions). It was also shown that accessible/active *ka*-marked referents can appear in sentence-focus constructions in Korean, in which case the propositions involving the referent report unexpected or surprising events. Chapter 5 also examined cases of the marker *-ka* appearing in presupposed subordinate clauses, which may pose a problem for the claim that *-ka* is a focus marker in Korean. First, I showed that presupposed propositions, depending on how they are interpreted, can also have the same focus markings (i.e. topic-comment, argument-focus, and sentence-focus markings) as asserted propositions. Then, pointing out that *-ka* can also function as a subject indicator in Korean, I suggested that *-ka* functions as a mere subject indicator in some presupposed propositions (i.e. presupposed propositions which have topic-comment construals), in which there is no actual focus.

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